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THE LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D

INCLUDING

A JOURNAL OF A TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES,

BY

JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

A NEW EDITION,

WITH NUMEROUS ADDITIONS AND NOTES,

BY

JOHN WILSON CROKER, LL.D. F.R.S.

——————Quo fit ut OMNIS
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
VITA SENIS—— HORART. 1 Sat. lib. II.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

I PASSED many hours with him on the 17th, [May], of which I find all my memorial is, "much laughing." It should seem he had that day been in a humour for jocularity and merriment, and upon such occasions I never knew a man laugh more heartily. We may suppose that the high relish of a state so different from his habitual gloom produced more than ordinary exertions of that distinguishing faculty of man, which has puzzled philosophers so much to explain. Johnson's laugh was as remarkable as any circumstance in his manner. It was a kind of good-humoured growl. Tom Davies described it drolly enough: "He laughs like a rhinoceros."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"21st May, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—I have an old amanuensis in great distress[1]. I have given what I think I can give, and begged till I cannot tell where to beg again. I put into his hands this morning four guineas. If you could collect three guineas more, it would clear him from his present difficulty. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"22d May, 1775.

"One thing or other still hinders me, besides, perhaps, what is the great hindrance, that I have no great mind to go. Boswell went away at two this morning. L[angton] I suppose goes this week. B[oswell] got two-and-forty guineas in fees while he was here. He has, by his wife's persuasion and mine, taken down a present for his mother-in-law.

* * * * * *

"I am not sorry that you read Boswell's journal. Is it not a merry piece? There is much in it about poor me.

"Do not buy C———'s[2] Travels; they are duller than T———'s[3]. W———[4] is too fond of words, but you may read him. I shall take care that Adair's account of America may be sent you, for I shall have it of my own.

"Beattie has called once to see me. He lives grand at the archbishop's."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"27th May, 1775

"DEAR SIR,—I make no doubt but you are now safely lodged in your own habitation, and have told all your adventures to Mrs. Boswell and Miss Veronica. Pray teach Veronica to love me. Bid her not mind mamma.

"Mrs. Thrale has taken cold, and been very much disordered, but I hope is grown well. Mr. Langton went yesterday to Lincolnshire, and has invited Nicolaida[5] to follow him. Beauclerk talks of going to Bath. I am to set out on Monday; so there is nothing but dispersion.

"I have returned Lord Hailes's entertaining sheets, but must stay till I come back for more, because it will be inconvenient to send them after me in my vagrant state.

"I promised Mrs. Macaulay[6] that I

1 [He had written to Mrs. Thrale the day before. "Peyton and Macbean are both starving, and I cannot keep them."—*Lett.* v. i. p. 218.—ED.]

2 [Probably "Chandler's Travels in Asia Minor."—ED.]

3 [Probably "Travels through Spain and Portugal in 1772 and 1775, by Richard Twiss, Esq."—ED.]

4 [Probably "Cursory Remarks made in a Tour through some of the Northern Parts of Europe, by Nathaniel Wraxall, jun."—ED.]

5 A learned Greek.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Langton was an enthusiast about Greek.—ED.]

6 Wife of the Reverend Mr. Kenneth Macaulay, author of "The History of St. Kilda."—BOSWELL.

would try to serve her son at Oxford. I have not forgotten it, nor am unwilling to perform it. If they desire to give him an English education, it should be considered whether they cannot send him for a year or two to an English school. If he comes immediately from Scotland, he can make no figure in our Universities. The schools in the north, I believe, are cheap, and when I was a young man, were eminently good.

"There are two little books published by the Foulis, Telemachus and Collins's Poems, each a shilling; I would be glad to have them.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, though she does not love me. You see what perverse things ladies are, and how little fit to be trusted with feudal estates. When she mends and loves me, there may be more hope of her daughters.

"I will not send compliments to my friends by name, because I would be loth to leave any out in the enumeration. Tell them, as you see them, how well I speak of Scotch politeness, and Scotch hospitality, and Scotch beauty, and of every thing Scotch, but Scotch oat-cakes and Scotch prejudices.

"Let me know the answer of *Rasay*, and the decision relating to Sir Allan[1]. I am, my dearest sir, with great affection, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

ED. [In the latter end of May he set out on what he called "his annual ramble into the middle counties," of which his letters to Mrs. Thrale give a kind of journal. He had, it seems, previous to his departure, a kind of fit, which, as well as Mr. Thrale's care for his personal appearance, he thus notices:]

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 25th May, 1775.

Letters, vol. i. p. 222—234. "The fit was a sudden faintness, such as I have had I know not how often; no harm came of it, and all is well. I cannot go [to Oxford] till Saturday, and then go I will if I can. My clothes, Mr. Thrale says, must be made like other people's, and they are gone to the tailor's."

"Oxford, 1st June, 1775.

"I did not make the epitaph[2] before last night, and this morning I have found it too long; I send it to you as it is to pacify you, and will make it shorter * *. Don't suppose that I live here as we live at Streatham. I went this morning to the chapel at six, and if I were to stay would try to conform to all wholesome rules * *. Mr. Coulson[3] is well, and still willing to keep me, but I delight not in being long here. Mr. Smollett, of Loch Lomond[4], and his lady have been here—we were glad to meet."

"6th June, 1775.

"Such is the uncertainty of all human things, that Mr. [Coulson] has quarrelled with me. He says I raise the laugh upon him, and he is an independent man, and all he has is his own, and he is not used to such things. And so I shall have no more good of C[oulson], of whom I never had any good but flattery, which my dear mistress knows I can have at home.

* * * * * *

"Here I am, and how to get away I do not see, for the power of departure, otherwise than in a post-chaise, depends upon accidental vacancies in passing coaches, of which all but one in a week pass through this place at three in the morning. After that one I have sent, but with little hope; yet I shall be very unwilling to stay here another week."

"[Oxford], 7th June, 1775

"C[oulson] and I am pretty well again. I grudge the cost of going to Lichfield—Frank and I—in a post-chaise—yet I think of thundering away to-morrow. So you will write your next dear letter to Lichfield."

"Lichfield, 10th June, 1775.

"On Thursday I took a post-chaise, and intended to have passed a day or two at Birmingham, but Hector had company in his house, and I went on to Lichfield, where I know not how long I shall stay."

"Lichfield, 11th June, 1775.

"Lady Smith is settled here at last, and sees company in her new house. I went on Saturday. Poor Lucy Porter has her hand in a bag, so unabled by the gout that she cannot dress herself. I go every day to Stowehill; both the sisters[5] are now at home. I sent Mrs. Aston a 'Taxation[6],' and sent it to nobody else, and Lucy borrowed it. Mrs. Aston, since that, inquired by a messenger when I was expected. 'I can tell nothing about it,' said Lucy: 'when he is to be here, I suppose *she* 'll know.' Every body remembers you all. You left a good impression behind you. I hope you

1 A lawsuit carried on by Sir Allan Maclean, chief of his clan, to recover certain parts of his family estates from the duke of Argyle.—BOSWELL.

2 [On Mrs. Salisbury.—ED.]

3 [Mr. Coulson, of University College. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 493.—ED.]

4 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 452.—ED.]

5 [Mrs. Gastrell and Miss Aston.—ED.]

6 [A copy of his pamphlet, "Taxation no Tyranny."—ED.]

will do the same at [Lewes]. Do not make them speeches. Unusual compliments, to which there is no stated and prescriptive answer, embarrass the feeble who do not know what to say, and disgust the wise, who, knowing them to be false, suspect them to be hypocritical. * * * * * * * You never told me, and I omitted to inquire, how you were entertained by Boswell's 'Journal.' One would think the man had been hired to be a spy upon me; he was very diligent, and caught opportunities of writing from time to time. You may now conceive yourself tolerably well acquainted with the expedition. Folks want me to go to Italy, but I say you are not for it."

"Lichfield, 13th June, 1775.

"I now write from Mrs. Cobb's, where I have had custard. Nothing considerable has happened since I wrote, only I am sorry to see Miss Porter so bad, and I am not pleased to find that, after a very comfortable intermission, the old flatulence distressed me again last night. 'The world is full of ups and downs,' as, I think, I told you once before.

"Lichfield is full of *box-clubs*. The ladies have one for their own sex. They have incorporated themselves under the appellation of the Amicable Society; and pay each twopence a week to the box. Any woman who can produce the weekly twopence is admitted to the society; and when any of the poor subscribers is in want, she has six shillings a week; and, I think, when she dies five pounds are given to her children. Lucy is not one, nor Mrs. Cobb. The subscribers are always quarrelling; and every now and then, a lady, in a fume, withdraws her name; but they are an hundred pounds beforehand.

"Mr. Green has got a cast of Shakspeare, which he holds to be a very exact resemblance.

"There is great lamentation here for the death of *Col.* Lucy is of opinion that he was wonderfully handsome.

"Boswell is a favourite, but he has lost ground since I told them that he is married, and all hope is over."]

Ed. [The history of Mrs. Williams belongs so inseparably to that of Dr. Johnson, that the Editor cannot omit here inserting the following letter, relating to a small annuity, which the charity of Mrs. Montagu had secured to Mrs. Williams, and which, as we shall see, was long afterwards a subject of acknowledgment from Dr. Johnson to that lady.]

["MRS. WILLIAMS TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"Johnson's-court, 26th June, 1775.

Mont. MS. "MADAM,—Often have I heard of generosity, benevolence, and compassion, but never have I known or experienced the reality of those virtues, till this joyful morning, when I received the honour of your most tender and affectionate letter with its most welcome contents. Madam, I may with truth say, I have not words to express my gratitude as I ought to a lady, whose bounty has, by an act of benevolence, doubled my income, and whose tender, compassionate assurance has removed the future anxiety of trusting to chance, the terror of which only could have prompted me to stand a public candidate for Mr. Hetherington's bounty. May my sincere and grateful thanks be accepted by you, and may the Author of all good bless and long continue a life, whose shining virtues are so conspicuous and exemplary, is the most ardent prayer of her who is, with the greatest respect, madam, your most devoted, truly obliged, and obedient humble servant,

"ANNA WILLIAMS."]

Ed. [The following letter, addressed to Dr. Johnson, though it does not belong to his personal history, describes a scene of public amusement, and affords some details concerning the habits of society, which may amuse the reader, and in a work of this nature will hardly be considered as misplaced.]

["MRS. THRALE TO DR. JOHNSON.

"24th June, 1775.

"Now for the regatta, of which, Baretti says, the first notion was taken from Venice, where the gondoliers practise rowing against each other perpetually; and I dare say 'tis good diversion where the weather invites, and the water seduces to such entertainments. Here, however, it was not likely to answer; and I think nobody was pleased. Lett v. i. p 247.

"Well! Crœsus promised a reward, you remember, for him who should produce a new delight; but the prize was never obtained, for nothing that was new proved delightful; and Dr. Goldsmith, three thousand years afterwards, found out that whoever did a new thing did a bad thing, and whoever said a new thing said a false thing. So yestermorning, a flag flying from some conspicuous steeple in Westminster gave notice of the approaching festival, and at noon the managers determined to hold it on that day. In about two hours the wind rose very high, and the river was exceedingly rough; but the lot was cast, and the ladies went on with their dresses. It had been agreed that all should wear white; but the ornaments were left to our own choice. I was afraid of not being fine enough; so I trimmed my white lutestring with silver gauze, and wore black riband intermixed We had obtained more tickets than I hoped for, though Sir Thomas Robinson[1] gave us

[1] [*Ante*, v. i. p. 173. —Ed.]

none at last; but he gives one such a profusion of words, and bows, and compliments, that I suppose he thinks every thing else superfluous. Mr. Cator[1] was the man for a real favour at last, whose character is directly opposite, as you know; but if both are actuated by the spirit of kindness, let us *try* at least to love them both.

"He wished Hester [Miss Thrale] to go, and she wished it too, and her father wished; so I would not stand out, though my fears for her health and safety lessened the pleasure her company always gives. The D'Avenants, then, Mr. Cator, Mr. Evans, Mr. Seward, and ourselves, set about being happy with all our might, and tried for a barge to flutter in altogether. The barges, however, were already full, and we were to be divided and put into separate boats. The water was rough, even seriously so; the time glided away in deliberation of what was to be done; and we resolved, at last, to run to the house of a gentleman in the Temple, of whom we knew nothing but that he was D'Avenant's friend, and look at the race from his windows,—then drive away for Ranelagh, in time to see the barges drawn up, and the company disembark. Of the race, however, scarce any thing could be seen for clouds of dust that intercepted one's sight; and we have no balconies to see shows from, as are provided in countries where processions make much of the means of entertainment; so we discomposed our headdresses against each other, by struggling for places in an open window, and then begged pardons with courtesies, which exposed our trains to be trod on, and made us still more out of humour. It was however a real pleasure to look at the crowd of spectators. Every shop was shut; every street deserted; and the tops of all such houses as had any catch of the river swarmed with people, like bees settling on a branch. Here is no exaggeration, upon my honour; even the lamp-irons on Westminster-bridge were converted into seats, while every lighter lying in the Thames bore men up to the topmast-head. This was the true wonder of the day. Baretti says he will show us finer sights when we go to Italy. I believe him; but shall we ever see so populous a city as London? so rich a city? so happy a city? I fancy not.

'Let bear or elephant be e'er so white,
The people sure, the people, are the sight.'

"They could not indeed be very attentive to the games, like those Horace talks of, for here was neither panther nor camel; no pretence to draw us together, as I could find;—yet they sat so thick upon the slating of Whitehall, that nobody could persuade me for a long while out of the notion that it was covered with black, till through a telescope we espied the *animals in motion*, like magnified mites in a bit of old cheese. Well! from this house in the Temple we hasted away to Ranelagh, happy in having at least convinced a hundred folks we never saw before, and perhaps never shall see again, that we had tickets for the regatta, and fine clothes to spoil with the rain, and that we were not come thither like the vulgar —in good time!—only to see the boat-race. And now, without one image of Cleopatra's galley or Virgil's games, or one pretext to say how it put us in mind of either, we drove to Ranelagh, and told each other all the way how pretty it would be to look at the ladies disembarking to musick, and walking in procession up to the rotunda. But the night came on; the wind roared; the rain fell; and the barges missing their way, many came up to the wrong stairs. The managers endeavoured to rectify the mistake, and drive them back, that some order might be kept, and some appearance of regularity might be made; but the women were weary and wet, and in no disposition to try for further felicity out of the old common road; so the procession was spoiled; and as to musick, we heard none but screams of the frighted company, as they were tossed about at the moment of getting to shore. Once more, then, all were turned loose to look for pleasure where it could be found. The rotunda was not to be opened till twelve o'clock, when the bell was to call us to sup there; the temporary building was not finished, and the rain would not permit walking in the garden. Calamity, however, vanishes often upon a near approach—does not it?—as well as happiness. We all crowded into the new building, from whence we drove the carpenters, and called for cards, without the help of which, by some fatality, no day dedicated to amusement is ever able to end.

"*Queeney* said there was no loss of the ornaments intended to decorate Neptune's hall; for she saw no attempt at embellishment, except a few fluttering rags, like those which dangle from a dyer's pole into the street; and in that room we sat telling opinions, adventures, &c. till supper was served, which the men said was an execrable one, and I thought should have been finer. 'Was nothing good, then?' you begin to exclaim; 'here is desire of saying something where little is to be said, and lamentations are the readiest nonsense my mistress can find to fill her letter with. No, no; I would commend the concert, the catch singers, for an hour, if you would hear me; the musick was well selected, and admirably executed; nor did the company look much amiss when all the *dismal* was

[1] [A timber-merchant in the Borough.—Ed.]

over, and we walked round Ranelagh a little in the old way;—every body being dressed in white was no advantage indeed to the general appearance.

* * * * * *

"We returned safe home about five or six o'clock: a new scene to Hester, who behaved sweetly, and had no fears in the crowd, but prodigious surprise in finding it broad day when we came out. I might have wondered too, for few people have frequented publick places less than myself; and for the first six years after my marriage, as you know, I never set my foot in any theatre or place of entertainment at all. What most amazed me about this regatta, however, was the mixture of company, when tickets were so difficult to obtain. Somebody talked at Ranelagh of two ladies that were drowned; but I have no doubt that was a dream."]

Ed. [In the last days of June, he removed to Ashbourne; and his letters thence contain the usual routine of his country observations, with one or two more characteristic circumstances. He was very anxious that an old horse of Mrs. Thrale's should not be sold to hard work, or, as he called it, degraded, for five pounds, and was willing to have borne the expense of maintaining the poor animal.

For his friend Baretti, of some point of whose conduct Mrs. Thrale had complained, he intercedes with that lady in a tone of modest propriety:

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"Ashbourne, 15th July, 1775.

Letters, v. i p. 278. "Poor Baretti! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank, and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank, he thinks, is to be cynical, and to be independent to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather because of his misbehaviour; I am afraid he has learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example."

Ed. This coolness soon ended, as the next letter informs us:

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"Ashbourne, 21st July, 1775.

Letters, p. 290. "You and [Baretti] are friends again. My dear mistress has the quality of being easily reconciled, and not easily offended. Kindness is a good thing in itself; and there are few things that are worthy of anger, and still fewer that can justify malignity.

"I am glad you read Boswell's Journal. You are now sufficiently informed of the whole transaction, and need not regret that you did not make the tour of the Hebrides."

"Lichfield, July [27], 1775.

"I have passed one day at Birmingham with my old friend Hector—*there's a name!* and his sister, an old *love*. My mistress is grown much older than my friend.

'O quid habes illius, illius
Quæ spirabat amores
Quæ me surpuerat mihi.'"
Hor. Od. 13. l. 4.

He returned to town about the end of August.] Ed.

After my return to Scotland, I wrote three letters to him, from which I extract the following passages:

"I have seen Lord Hailes since I came down. He thinks it wonderful that you are pleased to take so much pains in revising his 'Annals.' I told him that you said you were well rewarded by the entertainment which you had in reading them."

"There has been a numerous flight of Hebrideans in Edinburgh this summer, whom I have been happy to entertain at my house. Mr. Donald Macqueen[1] and Lord Monboddo supped with me one evening. They joined in controverting your proposition, that the Gaëlick of the Highlands and Isles of Scotland was not written till of late."

"My mind has been somewhat dark this summer. I have need of your warming and vivifying rays; and I hope I shall have them frequently. I am going to pass some time with my father at Auchinleck."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, Aug. 27, 1775.

"Dear sir,—I am returned from the annual ramble into the middle counties. Having seen nothing I had not seen before I have nothing to relate. Time has left that part of the island few antiquities; and commerce has left the people no singularities. I was glad to go abroad, and, perhaps, glad to come home; which is in other words, I was, I am afraid, weary of being at home, and weary of being abroad. Is not this the state of life? But, if we confess this weariness, let us not lament it; for all the wise and all the good say, that we may cure it.

"For the black fumes which rise in your mind, I can prescribe nothing but that you disperse them by honest business or innocent pleasure, and by reading, sometimes easy and sometimes serious. Change of

[1] The very learned minister in the Isle of Sky, whom both Dr. Johnson and I have mentioned with regard.—Boswell. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 377.—Ed.]

place is useful; and I hope that your residence at Auchinleck will have many good effects.

* * * * * *

"That I should have given pain to Rasay, I am sincerely sorry; and am therefore very much pleased that he is no longer uneasy. He still thinks that I have represented him as personally giving up the chieftainship. I meant only that it was no longer contested between the two houses, and supposed it settled, perhaps, by the cession of some remote generation, in the house of Dunvegan. I am sorry the advertisement was not continued for three or four times in the paper.

"That Lord Monboddo and Mr. Macqueen should controvert a position contrary to the imaginary interest of literary or national prejudice, might be easily imagined; but of a standing fact there ought to be no controversy; if there are men with tails, catch a *homo caudatus;* if there was writing of old in the Highlands or Hebrides, in the Erse language, produce the manuscripts. Where men write they will write to one another, and some of their letters, in families studious of their ancestry, will be kept. In Wales there are many manuscripts.

"I have now three parcels of Lord Hailes's history, which I purpose to return all the next week: that his respect for my little observations should keep his work in suspense, makes one of the evils of my journey. It is in our language, I think, a new mode of history which tells all that is wanted, and, I suppose, all that is known, without laboured splendour of language, or affected subtilty of conjecture. The exactness of his dates raises my wonder. He seems to have the closeness of Henault without his constraint.

"Mrs. Thrale was so entertained with your 'Journal[1],' that she almost read herself blind. She has a great regard for you.

"Of Mrs. Boswell, though she knows in her heart that she does not love me, I am always glad to hear any good, and hope that she and the little dear ladies will have neither sickness nor any other affliction. But she knows that she does not care what becomes of me, and for that she may be sure that I think her very much to blame.

"Never, my dear sir, do you take it into your head to think that I do not love you; you may settle yourself in full confidence both of my love and esteem: I love you as a kind man, I value you as a worthy man, and hope in time to reverence you as a man of exemplary piety. I hold you, as Hamlet has it, 'in my heart of hearts,' and therefore, it is little to say, that I am, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 30th August, 1775.

"SIR,—If in these papers[2] there is little alteration attempted, do not suppose me negligent. I have read them perhaps more closely than the rest; but I find nothing worthy of an objection.

"Write to me soon, and write often, and tell me all your honest heart. I am, sir, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"London, 9th September, 1775.

"DEAR MADAM,—I have sent your books by the carrier, and in Sandys's Travels you will find your glasses. Pearson MS.

"I have written this post to the ladies at Stow-hill, and you may, the day after you have this, or at any other time, send Mrs. Gastrel's books.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to all my good friends.

"I hope the poor dear hand is recovered, and you are now able to write, which, however, you need not do, for I am going to Brighthelmstone, and when I come back will take care to tell you. In the mean time take great care of your health, and drink as much as you can. I am, dearest love, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"14th Sept. 1775.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I now write to you, lest in some of your freaks and humours you should fancy yourself neglected. Such fancies I must entreat you never to admit, at least never to indulge; for my regard for you is so radicated and fixed, that it is become part of my mind, and cannot be effaced but by some cause uncommonly violent; therefore, whether I write or not, set your thoughts at rest. I now write to tell you that I shall not very soon write again, for I am to set out to-morrow on another journey.

* * * * * *

"Your friends are all well at Streatham and in Leicesterfields[3]. Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, if she is in good humour with me. I am, sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

What he mentions in such light terms

[1] My "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," which that lady read in the original manuscript.—BOSWELL.

[2] Another parcel of Lord Hailes's "Annals of Scotland."—BOSWELL.

[3] Where Sir Joshua Reynolds lived.—BOSWELL.

as, "I am to set out to-morrow on another journey," I soon afterwards discovered was no less than a tour to France with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. This was the only time in his life that he went upon the Continent.

"TO MR. ROBERT LEVET.

"Calais, 18th Sept. 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—We are here in France, after a very pleasing passage of no more than six hours. I know not when I shall write again, and therefore I write now, though you cannot suppose that I have much to say. You have seen France yourself. From this place we are going to Rouen, and from Rouen to Paris, where Mr. Thrale designs to stay about five or six weeks. We have a regular recommendation to the English resident, so we shall not be taken for vagabonds. We think to go one way and return another, and see as much as we can. I will try to speak a little French; I tried hitherto but little, but I spoke sometimes. If I heard better, I suppose I should learn faster. I am, sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"Paris, 22d October, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—We are still here, commonly very busy in looking about us. We have been to day at Versailles. You have seen it, and I shall not describe it. We came yesterday from Fontainbleau, where the court is now. We went to see the king and queen at dinner, and the queen was so impressed by Miss [1], that she sent one of the gentlemen to inquire who she was. I find all true that you have ever told me at Paris. Mr. Thrale is very liberal, and keeps us two coaches, and a very fine table; but I think our cookery very bad. Mrs. Thrale got into a convent of English nuns, and I talked with her through the grate, and I am very kindly used by the English Benedictine friars. But upon the whole I cannot make much acquaintance here; and though the churches, palaces, and some private houses are very magnificent, there is no very great pleasure after having seen many, in seeing more; at least the pleasure, whatever it be, must some time have an end, and we are beginning to think when we shall come home. Mr. Thrale calculates that as we left Streatham on the fifteenth of September, we shall see it again about the fifteenth of November.

"I think I had not been on this side of the sea five days before I found a sensible improvement in my health. I ran a race in the rain this day, and beat Baretti. Baretti is a fine fellow, and speaks French, I think, quite as well as English.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Williams; and give my love to Francis; and tell my friends that I am not lost. I am, dear sir, your affectionate humble, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 24th October, 1775.

"MY DEAR SIR,—If I had not been informed that you were at Paris, you should have had a letter from me by the earliest opportunity, announcing the birth of my son, on the 9th instant; I have named him Alexander[2], after my father. I now write, as I suppose your fellow-traveller, Mr. Thrale, will return to London this week, to attend his duty in parliament, and that you will not stay behind him.

"I send another parcel of Lord Hailes's 'Annals.' I have undertaken to solicit you for a favour to him, which he thus requests in a letter to me: 'I intend soon to give you 'The Life of Robert Bruce,' which you will be pleased to transmit to Dr. Johnson. I wish that you could assist me in a fancy which I have taken, of getting Dr. Johnson to draw a character of Robert Bruce, from the account that I give of that prince. If he finds materials for it in my work, it will be a proof that I have been fortunate in selecting the most striking incidents.'

"I suppose by 'The Life of Robert Bruce,' his lordship means that part of his 'Annals' which relates the history of that prince, and not a separate work.

"Shall we have 'A Journey to Paris,' from you in the winter? You will, I hope, at any rate, be kind enough to give me some account of your French travels very soon, for I am very impatient. What a different scene have you viewed this autumn, from that which you viewed in autumn 1773! I ever am, my dear sir, your much obliged and affectionate humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

'TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"16th November, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—I am glad that the young laird is born, and an end, as I hope, put to the only difference that you can ever have

[1] Miss Thrale.—BOSWELL.

[2] [The Editor had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He was a high-spirited, clever, and amiable gentleman; and, like his father, of a frank and social disposition; but it is said that he did not relish the recollections of our authour's devotion to Dr. Johnson: like old lord Auchinleck, he seemed to think it a kind of derogation. He was created a baronet in 1821, but was unfortunately killed in a duel, arising from a political dispute, near Edinburgh, on the 26th March, 1822, by Mr. Stuart, of Duncarn. He left issue a son and two daughters.—ED.]

with Mrs. Boswell[1]. I know that she does not love me; but I intend to persist in wishing her well till I get the better of her.

"Paris is, indeed, a place very different from the Hebrides, but it is to a hasty traveller not so fertile of novelty, nor affords so many opportunities of remark. I cannot pretend to tell the publick any thing of a place better known to many of my readers than to myself. We can talk of it when we meet.

"I shall go next week to Streatham, from whence I purpose to send a parcel of the 'History' every post. Concerning the character of Bruce, I can only say, that I do not see any great reason for writing it; but I shall not easily deny what Lord Hailes and you concur in desiring.

"I have been remarkably healthy all the journey, and hope you and your family have known only that trouble and danger which has so happily terminated. Among all the congratulations that you may receive, I hope you believe none more warm or sincere than those of, dear sir, your most affectionate, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD[2].

"16th November, 1775.

"DEAR MADAM,—This week I came home from Paris. I have brought you a little box, which I thought pretty; but I know not whether it is properly a snuff-box, or a box for some other use. I will send it, when I can find an opportunity. I have been through the whole journey remarkably well. My fellow-travellers were the same whom you saw at Lichfield, only we took Baretti with us. Paris is not so fine a place as you would expect. The palaces and churches, however, are very splendid and magnificent; and what would please you, there are many very fine pictures; but I do not think their way of life commodious or pleasant.

"Let me know how your health has been all this while. I hope the fine summer has given you strength sufficient to encounter the winter.

"Make my compliments to all my friends; and, if your fingers will let you, write to me, or let your maid write, if it be troublesome to you. I am, dear madam, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"December, 1775.

"DEAR MADAM,—Some weeks ago I wrote to you, to tell you that I was just come home from a ramble, and hoped that I should have heard from you. I am afraid winter has laid hold on your fingers, and hinders you from writing. However, let somebody write, if you cannot, and tell me how you do, and a little of what has happened at Lichfield among our friends. I hope you are all well.

"When I was in France, I thought myself growing young, but am afraid that cold weather will take part of my new vigour from me. Let us, however, take care of ourselves, and lose no part of our health by negligence.

"I never knew whether you received the Commentary on the New Testament, and the Travels, and the glasses.

"Do, my dear love, write to me; and do not let us forget each other. This is the season of good wishes, and I wish you all good. I have not lately seen Mr. Porter[3], nor heard of him. Is he with you?

"Be pleased to make my compliments to Mrs. Adey, and Mrs. Cobb, and all my friends; and when I can do any good, let me know. I am, dear madam, yours most affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

It is to be regretted, that he did not write an account of his travels in France; for as he is reported to have once said, that "he could write the life of a broomstick[4]," so, notwithstanding so many former travellers have exhausted almost every subject for remark in that great kingdom, his very accurate observation, and peculiar vigour of thought and illustration, would have produced a wonderful work. During his visit to it, which lasted about two months, he wrote notes or minutes of what he saw. He promised to show me them, but I neglected to put him in mind of it; and the greatest part of them has been lost, or perhaps destroyed in a precipitate burning of his papers a few days before his death, which must ever be lamented; one small paper book, however, entitled, "France II.," has been preserved, and is in my possession. It is a diurnal register of his life and observations, from the 10th of October

[1] This alludes to my old feudal principle of preferring male to female succession.—BOSWELL.

[2] There can be no doubt that many years previous to 1775, he corresponded with this lady, who was his stepdaughter, but none of his earlier letters to her have been preserved.—BOSWELL. Since the death of the authour, several of Johnson's letters to Mrs. Lucy Porter, written before 1775, were obligingly communicated to me by the Rev. Dr. Vyse, and are printed in the present edition.—MALONE. [Several others, as has been already stated (*ante*, vol. i. p. 80), are added to this edition.—ED.]

[3] Son of Mrs. Johnson, by her first husband.—BOSWELL.

[4] It is probable that the authour's memory here deceived him, and that he was thinking of Stella's remark, that Swift could write finely upon a broomstick.—See *Johnson's Life of Swift*.—J. BOSWELL.

to the 4th of November, inclusive, being twenty-six days, and shows an extraordinary attention to various minute particulars. Being the only memorial of this tour that remains, my readers, I am confident, will peruse it with pleasure, though his notes are very short, and evidently written only to assist his own recollection.

Tour in France. "*Tuesday*, 10*th October*.—We saw the *école militaire*, in which one hundred and fifty young boys are educated for the army—They have arms of different sizes, according to the age—flints of wood—The building is very large, but nothing fine except the council-room—The French have large squares in the windows—They make good iron palisades[1]—Their meals are gross[2].

"We visited the Observatory, a large building of a great height—The upper stones of the parapet very large, but not cramped with iron[3]—The flat on the top is very extensive; but on the insulated part there is no parapet—Though it was broad enough, I did not care to go upon it—Maps were printing in one of the rooms.

"We walked to a small convent of the Fathers of the Oratory—In the reading-desk of the refectory lay the Lives of the Saints.

"*Wednesday*, 11*th October*.—We went to see *Hôtel de Chatlois*[4], a house not very large, but very elegant—One of the rooms was gilt to a degree that I never saw before—The upper part for servants and their masters was pretty.

"Thence we went to Mr. Monville's, a house divided into small apartments, furnished with effeminate and minute elegance—Porphyry.

"Thence we went to St. Roque's church, which is very large—The lower part of the pillars incrusted with marble—Three chapels behind the high altar; the last a mass of low arches—Altars, I believe, all round.

"We passed through *Place de Vendôme*, a fine square, about as big as Hanover-square—Inhabited by the high families—Louis XIV. on horseback in the middle[5].

"Monville is the son of a farmer-general—In the house of *Chatlois* is a room furnished with japan, fitted up in Europe.

"We dined with Bocage[6], the Marquis Blanchetti, and his lady—The sweetmeats taken by the Marchioness Blanchetti, after observing that they were dear[7]—Mr. Le Roy, Count Manucci, the abbé, the prior, and Father Wilson[8], who staid with me, till I took him home in the coach.

"Bathiani is gone.

"The French have no laws for the maintenance of their poor—Monk not necessarily a priest—Benedictines rise at four; are at church an hour and a half; at church again half an hour before, half an hour after, dinner; and again from half an hour after seven to eight—They may sleep eight hours—bodily labour wanted in monasteries.

"The poor taken into hospitals, and miserably kept—Monks in the convent fifteen: accounted poor.

"*Thursday*, 12*th October*.—We went to the Gobelins—Tapestry makes a good picture—imitates flesh exactly—One piece with a gold ground—the birds not exactly coloured—Thence we went to the king's cabinet; very neat, not, perhaps, perfect—Gold ore—Candles of the candle tree—Seeds—Woods—Thence to Gagnier's[9] house, where I saw rooms nine, furnished with a profusion of wealth and elegance which I never had seen before—Vases—Pictures—The dragon china—The lustre said to be of crystal, and to have cost 3,500*l*.—The whole furniture said to have cost 125,000*l*.—Damask hangings covered with pictures—Porphyry—This house struck me—Then we waited on the ladies to Monville's—Captain Irwin with us[10]—Spain—County towns all beggars—At Dijon he could not

[1] [Alluding, probably, to the fine *grilles* so frequent in France. He had, probably, just seen that of the *Hôtel des Invalides*, which is one of the finest.—Ed.]

[2] [The contrary has been the general opinion; and Johnson was certainly a bad judge in that point, if he believed that his own taste was delicate.—Ed.]

[3] [There was neither iron nor wood originally used in any part of the building. An iron rail was afterwards added to the great stairs.—Ed.]

[4] [This seems to be a mistake; probably for the *Hôtel de Chatelet*.—Ed.]

[5] [Of one block.—Ed.]

[6] [Madame Du Bocage.—See *post*.—Ed.]

[7] [Johnson seems to suggest, that it would have been better bred not to have *eaten* what was *dear*; but the want of good-breeding (if any, which would depend on the context) was in *alluding* to the *dearness*, and not in eating what was on the table.—Ed.]

[8] [Who the Abbé was does not appear. The two latter gentlemen were probably members of the English Benedictine convent.—Ed.]

[9] [Perhaps Gagny, Intendant des Finances, who had a fine house in the Rue de Varennes.—Ed.]

[10] The rest of this paragraph appears to be a minute of what was told by captain Irwin.—Boswell. [And is therefore marked as quotation—Ed.]

find the way to Orleans—Cross roads of France very bad—Five soldiers—Woman—Soldiers escaped—The colonel would not lose five men for the death of one woman—The magistrate cannot seize a soldier but by the colonel's permission—Good inn at Nismes—Moors of Barbary fond of Englishmen—Gibraltar eminently healthy; it has beef from Barbary—There is a large garden—Soldiers sometimes fall from the rock.'

"*Friday, 13th October.*—I staid at home all day, only went to find the prior, who was not at home—I read something in Canus [1]—*Nec admiror, nec multum laudo.*

Saturday, 14th October.—We went to the house of M. [D'] Argenson, which was almost wainscotted with looking-glasses, and covered with gold—The ladies' closet wainscotted with large squares of glass over painted paper—They always place mirrours to reflect their rooms.

"Then we went to Julien's [2], the treasurer of the clergy—30,000*l.* a year—The house has no very large room, but is set with mirrours, and covered with gold—Books of wood here, and in another library.

"At D********'s [3] I looked into the books in the lady's closet, and in contempt showed them to Mr. T[hrale]—'Prince Titi [4]; Bibl. des Fées,' and other books—She was offended, and shut up, as we heard afterwards, her apartment.

"Then we went to Julien le Roy, the king's watch-maker, a man of character in his business, who showed a small clock made to find the longitude—A decent man.

"Afterwards we saw the *Palais Marchand* [5] and the courts of justice, civil and criminal—Queries on the *Selette* [6]—This building has the old Gothic passages, and a great appearance of antiquity—Three hundred prisoners sometimes in the gaol.

"Much disturbed; hope no ill will be [7].

"In the afternoon I visited Mr. Freron the journalist—He spoke Latin very scantily, but seemed to understand me—His house not splendid, but of commodious size—His family, wife, son, and daughter, not elevated, but decent—I was pleased with my reception—He is to translate my books, which I am to send him with notes.

"*Sunday, 15th October.*—At Choisi, a royal palace on the banks of the Seine, about 7m. from Paris—The terrace noble along the river—The rooms numerous and grand, but not discriminated from other palaces—The chapel beautiful, but small—China globes—Inlaid tables—Labyrinth—Sinking table [8]—Toilet tables.

"*Monday, 16th October.*—The Palais Royal very grand, large, and lofty—A very great collection of pictures—Three of Raphael—Two Holy Family—One small piece of M. Angelo—One room of Rubens—I thought the pictures of Raphael fine.

"The Thuilleries—Statues—Venus—Æn. and Anchises in his arms—Nilus—Many more—The walks not open to mean persons—Chairs at night hired for two sous a piece—Pont tournant [9].

"Austin Nuns [10]—Grate—Mrs. Fermor, Abbess—She knew Pope, and thought him disagreeable—Mrs. —— has many books—has seen life—Their frontlet disagreeable—Their hood—Their life easy—Rise about five; hour and half in chapel—Dine at ten—Another hour and half in chapel; half an

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1 Melchior Canus, a celebrated Spanish Dominican, who died at Toledo, in 1560. He wrote a treatise "De Locis Theologicis," in twelve books.—Boswell. [He was celebrated for the beauty of his Latinity: "Melchior Canus parlait Latin comme Ciceron."—*Vigneul Marvilliana*, v. i. p. 161.—Ed.]

2 [*M. de St. Julien*, Receveur général du clergé.—*Mém. de Bachaumont*, v. viii. p. 180.—Ed.]

3 [D'Argenson's.—Ed.]

4 [The history of *Prince Titi* was said to be the *auto-biography* of Frederick, Prince of Wales, but was probably written by Ralph, his secretary. See Park's *Roy. and Nob. Auth.* vol. i. p. 171.—Ed.] [A ludicrous error of the Editor's, illustrative of the vice of annotators, whose optics are too apt to behold mysteries in very plain matters. The History of Prince Titi was a child's book with that title.—F. J.]

5 [Dr. Johnson is in error in applying, as he always does, the name of *Palais-Marchand* to the whole of that vast building called generally the *Palais*, which from being the old *palace* of the kings of France had (like our own palace of Westminster) become appropriated to the sittings of the parliament and the courts of justice; and the *Conciergerie* of that palace (like the *Gatehouse* of ours) became a prison. The *Palais Marchand* was only the stalls (like what are now called *bazars*) which were placed along some of the galleries and corridors of the *Palais*.—Ed.]

6 [The *selette* was a stool on which the criminal sat while he was *interrogated—questioned* by the court. This is what Johnson means by "*queries*."—Ed.]

7 This passage, which so many think superstitious, reminds me of "Archbishop Laud's Diary."—Boswell. [It, perhaps, had no superstitious meaning. He felt, it would seem, his mind disturbed, and may naturally have been apprehensive of becoming worse.—Ed.]

8 [A round table, the centre of which descended by machinery to a lower floor; so that supper might be served and removed without the presence of servants. It was invented by Louis XV. during the favour of Madame du Barri.—Ed.]

9 [Before the revolution, the passage from the garden of the Thuilleries into the *Place Louis XV.* was over a *pont tournant*, a kind of drawbridge.—Ed.]

10 [The English convent of *Notre Dame de Sion*, of the order of St. Augustine, situated in the Rue des Fossés St. Victor.—Ed.]

hour about three, and half an hour more at seven—four hours in chapel—A large garden—Thirteen pensioners[1]—Teachers complained.

"At the Boulevards saw nothing, yet was glad to be there—Rope-dancing and farce—Egg dance.

"N. [Note.]—Near Paris, whether on week-days or Sundays, the roads empty.

"*Tuesday, 17th October.*—At the *Palais Marchand* I bought

A snuff box,	24 *Livres*
	6
Table book,	15
Scissors 3 p [pair]	18

[*Livres*] 63—2*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* ster.

"We heard the lawyers plead—N. As many killed at Paris as there are days in the year—*Chambre de question*[2]—Tournelle at the Palais Marchand[3]—An old venerable building.

"The Palais Bourbon, belonging to the Prince of Condé—Only one small wing shown—lofty—splendid—gold and glass—The battles of the great Cond are painted in one of the rooms—The present prince a grandsire at thirty-nine[4].

"The sight of palaces, and other great buildings, leaves no very distinct images, unless to those who talk of them—As I entered, my wife was in my mind[5]: she would have been pleased. Having now nobody to please, I am little pleased.

"N. In France there is no middle rank[6].

"So many shops open, that Sunday is little distinguished at Paris.—The palaces of Louvre and Thuilleries granted out in lodgings.

"In the *Palais de Bourbon*, gilt globes of metal at the fireplace.

"The French beds commended—Much of the marble only paste.

"The colosseum[7] a mere wooden building, at least much of it.

"*Wednesday, 18th October.*—We went to Fontainbleau, which we found a large mean town, crowded with people—The forest thick with woods, very extensive—Manucci secured us lodgings—The appearance of the country pleasant—No hills, few streams, only one hedge—I remember no chapels nor crosses on the road—Pavement still, and rows of trees.

"N. Nobody but mean people walk in Paris.

"*Thursday, 19th October.*—At court we saw the apartments—The king's bed-chamber and council-chamber extremely splendid—Persons of all ranks in the external rooms through which the family passes—servants and masters—Brunet[8] with us the second time.

"The introductor came to us—civil to me—Presenting—I had scruples[9]—Not ne-

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1 [Young ladies, who paid for their education. Before the revolution, there were no boarding schools, and all young ladies were educated in the convents.—ED.]

2 [This was one of the rooms of the *Conciergerie*, where *la question*—torture—was applied.—ED.]

3 [Again he mistakes, by introducing the word *Marchand*. The word *Tournelle* designated that portion of the parliament of Paris which tried criminal causes, and that part of the *Palais* in which they sat.—ED.]

4 [The Prince de Condé was born in 1736, and died in 1818. The *grandson* was the celebrated and unfortunate Duke d'Enghein, born in 1755, murdered in 1804. The father, "restes infortunés du plus beau sang du monde," still lives under his former title of Duc de Bourbon.—ED.]

5 His tender affection for his departed wife, of which there are many evidences in his "Prayers and Meditations," appears very feelingly in this passage.—BOSWELL.

6 [This observation, which Johnson afterwards repeats, was unfounded in the sense in which he appears to have understood it. France was *in theory* divided (as England is) into the *clergy*, the *nobles*, and the *commons*, and so it might be said that there was no middle rank; but not only did the theoretical constitution of society thus resemble that of England, but so did its practical details. There were first the *peers* of France, who had seats and voices in the parliament, but were of little weight as a political body, from the smallness of their numbers, and because their *parliament* had only continued to be, what we still call ours, a *high court*, and had lost its *legislative* functions;—next came the *noblesse*—the *gentilhommes*—answering to our *gentry*;—then the middle classes of society, composed of the poorer gentry, lawyers, medical men, inferior clergy, literary men, merchants, artists, manufacturers, notaries, shopkeepers, in short, all those who in every country constitute the *middle* classes, and they undoubtedly existed in France in their due proportion to the gentry on the one hand, and the working classes on the other. Johnson's remark is the stranger, because it would seem that his intercourse while in Paris was almost exclusively with persons of this *middle class*; but it must be observed, that his intercourse and his consequent sources of information were not extensive. Mrs. Piozzi says to him, talking of the progress of refinement of manners in England, "I much wonder whether this refinement has spread all over the continent, or whether it is confined to our own island: when *we were in France we could form little judgment, as our time was chiefly passed among the English.*"—*Lett.*—ED.]

7 [This building, which stood in the Faubourg St. Honoré, was a kind of Ranelagh, and was destroyed a few years after. The "Memoires de Bachaumont" call it "monument monstreux de la folie Parisienne."—V. i. p. 311.—ED.]

8 [Perhaps M. J. L. Brunet, a celebrated advocate of the parliament of Paris, author of several distinguished professional works.—ED.]

9 [It was the custom previous to court present

cessary—We went and saw the king and queen at dinner—We saw the other ladies at dinner—Madame Elizabeth, with the Princess of Guimené—At night we went to a comedy—I neither saw nor heard—Drunken women—Mrs. Th[rale] preferred one to the other.

"*Friday, 20th October.*—We saw the queen mount in the forest—Brown habit; rode aside: one lady rode aside[1]—The queen's horse light gray—martingale—She galloped—We then went to the apartments, and admired them—Then wandered through the palace—In the passages, stalls and shops—Painting in fresco by a great master, worn out—We saw the king's horses and dogs—The dogs almost all English—Degenerate.

"The horses not much commended—The stables cool; the kennel filthy.

"At night the ladies went to the opera—I refused, but should have been welcome.

"The king fed himself with his left hand as we.

"*Saturday, 21st October.*—In the night I got round—We came home to Paris—I think we did not see the chapel—Tree broken by the wind—The French chairs made all of boards painted[2].

"N. Soldiers at the court of justice[3]—Soldiers not amenable to the magistrates—Dijon women[4].

"Faggots in the palace—Every thing slovenly, except in the chief rooms—Trees in the roads, some tall, none old, many very young and small.

"Women's saddles seem ill made—Queen's bridle woven with silver—Tags to strike the horse.

"*Sunday, 22d October.*—To Versailles, a mean[5] town—Carriages of business passing—Mean shops against the wall—Our way lay through Sêve, where the China manufacture—Wooden bridge at Sêve, in the way to Versailles—The palace of great extent—The front long; I saw it not perfectly—The Menagerie—Cygnets dark; their black feet; on the ground; tame—Halcyons, or gulls—Stag and hind, young—Aviary, very large; the net, wire—Black stag of China, small—Rhinoceros, the horn broken and pared away, which, I suppose, will grow; the basis, I think, four inches across; the skin folds like loose cloth doubled over his body, and cross his hips; a vast animal, though young; as big, perhaps, as four oxen—The young elephant, with his tusks just appearing—The brown bear put out his paws—all very tame—The lion—The tigers I did not well view—The camel, or dromedary, with two bunches called the Huguin[6], taller than any horse—Two camels with one bunch—Among the birds was a pelican, who being let out, went to a fountain, and swam about to catch fish—His feet well webbed; he dipped his head, and turned his long bill sidewise—He caught two or three fish, but did not eat them.

"Trianon is a kind of retreat appendant to Versailles—It has an open portico; the pavement, and, I think, the pillars, of marble—There are many rooms, which I do not distinctly remember—A table of porphyry, about five feet long, and between two and three broad, given to Louis XIV. by the Venetian state—In the council-room almost all that was not door or window was, I think, looking-glass—Little Trianon is a small palace like a gentleman's house—The upper floor paved with brick[7]—Little Vienne—The court is ill paved—The rooms at the top are small, fit to soothe the imagination with privacy—In the front of Versailles are small basins of water on the terrace, and other basins, I think, below them—There are little courts—The great gallery is wainscotted with mirrours not very large, but joined by frames—I suppose the large plates were not yet made—The playhouse was very large[8]—The chapel I do not remember

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ations, that an officer waited on the person to be introduced, to instruct them in the forms. Johnson's scruples probably arose from this—it was an etiquette generally insisted on to present at foreign courts those only who had been presented to their own sovereign at home. Johnson had never been publickly presented to the king, though he had had that honour in private, and may, therefore, have entertained scruples whether he was entitled to be presented to the king of France; but it would seem that those scruples were not necessary, the rule perhaps extending only to *formal presentations* at court, and not to admission to see the king dine.—Ed.]

1 [This probably means that the queen was attended by only one lady, who also rode aside, and *not* that one female attendant rode so, while other ladies rode astride.—Ed.]

2 [Meaning, no doubt, that they were not of cedar, ebony, or mahogany, but of some meaner wood coloured over, a fashion which had not yet reached England.—Ed.]

3 [The *marechaussée* was posted at the gates of the courts of justice; but the interior discipline was maintained by *huissiers*, ushers, the servants of the court.—Ed.]

4 See *ante*, p 12.—Boswell.

5 [There must be some mistake. Versailles is a remarkably stately town.—Ed.]

6 This epithet should be applied to the animal with one bunch.—Boswell.

7 [The upper floors of most houses in France are tiled.—Ed.]

8 [That magnificent building, which was both a theatre and a ball-room. It was rarely used; the lighting and other expenses for a single night being 100,000 francs. It is celebrated in the History of the Revolution as the scene of the entertainment given by the Gardes du Corps, on the 1st October, 1789; of which innocent and, indeed, laudable testimony of attachment between them

if we saw[1]—We saw one chapel, but I am not certain whether there or at Trianon—The foreign office paved with bricks[2]—The dinner half a louis each, and, I think, a louis over—Money given at menagerie, three livres; at palace, six livres.

"*Monday*, 23*d October*.—Last night I wrote to Levet[3]—We went to see the looking-glasses wrought—They come from Normandy in cast plates, perhaps the third of an inch thick—At Paris they are ground upon a marble table, by rubbing one plate upon another with grit between them—The various sands, of which there are said to be five, I could not learn—The handle, by which the upper glass is moved, has the form of a wheel, which may be moved in all directions—The plates are sent up with their surfaces ground, but not polished, and so continue till they are bespoken, lest time should spoil the surface, as we were told—Those that are to be polished are laid on a table covered with several thick cloths, hard strained, that the resistance may be equal: they are then rubbed with a hand rubber, held down hard by a contrivance which I did not well understand—The powder which is used last seemed to me to be iron dissolved in aquafortis; they called it, as Baretti said, *marc de l'eau forte*, which he thought was dregs—They mentioned vitriol and saltpetre—The cannon-ball swam in the quicksilver—To silver them, a leaf of beaten tin is laid, and rubbed with quicksilver, to which it unites—Then more quicksilver is poured upon it, which, by its mutual [attraction] rises very high—Then a paper is laid at the nearest end of the plate, over which the glass is slided till it lies upon the plate, having driven much of the quicksilver before it—It is then, I think, pressed upon cloth, and then set sloping to drop the superfluous mercury: the slope is daily heightened towards a perpendicular.

"In the way I saw the Grêve, the mayor's house[4], and the Bastile.

"We then went to Sans-terre, a brewer[5]—He brews with about as much malt as Mr. Thrale, and sells his beer at the same price, though he pays no duty for malt, and little more than half as much for beer—Beer is sold retail at sixpence a bottle—He brews 4,000 barrels a year—There are seventeen brewers in Paris, of whom none is supposed to brew more than he—Reckoning them at 3,000 each, they make 51,000 a year—They make their malt, for malting is here no trade.

"The moat of the Bastile is dry.

"*Tuesday*, 24*th October*.—We visited the king's library—I saw the *Speculum humanæ Salvationis*, rudely printed, with ink, sometimes pale, sometimes black; part supposed to be with wooden types, and part with pages cut in boards. The Bible, supposed to be older than that of Mentz, in 1462; it has no date; it is supposed to have been printed with wooden types—I am in doubt; the print is large and fair, in two folios—Another book was shown me, supposed to have been printed with wooden types—I think, *Durandi Sanctuarium* in 1458—This is inferred from the difference of form sometimes seen in the same letter, which might be struck with different puncheons—The regular similitude of most letters proves better that they are metal—I saw nothing but the *Speculum*, which I had not seen, I think, before.

"Thence to the Sorbonne—The library very large, not in lattices like the king's—*Marbone* and *Durandi*, q. collection 14 vol. *Scriptores de rebus Gallicis*, many folios—*Histoire Genealogique of France*, 9 vol.—*Gallia Christiana*, the first edition, 4to. the last, f. 12 vol.—The prior and librarian dined with us—I waited on them home—Their garden pretty, with covered walks, but small; yet may hold many students—The doctors of the Sorbonne are all equal—choose those who succeed to vacancies—Profit little.

"*Wednesday*, 25*th October*.—I went with the prior to St. Cloud, to see Dr. Hooke[6]—We walked round the palace, and had some talk—I dined with our whole company at the monastery—In the library, *Beroald—Cymon—Titus*, from Boccace—*Oratio Proverbialis* to the Virgin, from Petrarch; Falkland to Sandys—Dryden's Preface to the third vol. of Miscellanies[7].

"*Thursday*, 26*th October*.—We saw the china at Sêve, cut, glazed, painted—Bellevue[8], a pleasing house, not great: fine prospect—Meudon, an old palace—Alexander, in porphyry: hollow between eyes and nose, thin cheeks—Plato and Aristotle—Noble terrace overlooks the town. St. Cloud—Gallery not very high, nor grand, but pleasing—In the rooms, Michael Ange-

and their unhappy sovereigns, the rebels, by misrepresentations and calumnies, made so serious an affair.—ED.]

1 [It is surprising how this should have escaped Johnson's observations. It is, both externally and internally, one of the most remarkable objects of Versailles.—ED.]

2 [Tiles.—ED.]

3 [*Ante*, p. 9.—ED.]

4 [The Hôtel de Ville.—ED.]

5 [Santerre.] The detestable ruffian who afterwards conducted Louis the Sixteenth to the scaffold, and commanded the troops that guarded it during his murder.—MALONE.

6 [Second son of Hooke, the historian, a doctor of the Sorbonne.—ED.]

7 He means, I suppose, that he read these different pieces while he remained in the library.—BOSWELL.

8 [At that period inhabited by the king's aunts.—ED.]

10, drawn by himself, Sir Thomas More, Des Cartes, Bochart, Naudæus, Mazarine —Gilded wainscot, so common that it is not minded—Gough and Keene—Hooke came to us at the inn—A message from Drumgould.

"*Friday, 27th October.*—I staid at home —Gough and Keene, and Mrs. S———'s[1] friend dined with us—This day we began to have a fire—The weather is grown very cold, and, I fear, has a bad effect upon my breath, which has grown much more free and easy in this country.

"*Saturday, 28th October.*—I visited the Grand Chartreux[2], built by St. Louis—It is built for forty, but contains only twenty-four, and will not maintain more—The friar that spoke to us had a pretty apartment—Mr. Baretti says four rooms; I remember but three—His books seemed to be French —His garden was neat; he gave me grapes —We saw the Place de Victoire, with the statues of the king, and the captive nations.

"We saw the palace and gardens of Luxembourg, but the gallery was shut—We climbed to the top stairs—I dined with Colebrooke[3], who had much company—Foote, Sir George Rodney[4], Motteux, Udson, Taaf—Called on the prior, and found him in bed.

"Hotel—a guinea a day—Coach, three guineas a week—Valet de place, three l. a day—*Avant-coureur*[5], a guinea a week—Ordinary dinner, six l. a head—Our ordinary seems to be about five guineas a day—Our extraordinary expenses, as diversions, gratuities, clothes, I cannot reckon—Our travelling is ten guineas a day.

"White stockings, 18 l.[6] Wig—Hat.

"*Sunday, 29th October.*—We saw the boarding-school—The *Enfans trouvés*—A room with about eighty-six children in cradles, as sweet as a parlour—They lose a third; take in to perhaps more than seven [years old]; put them to trades; pin to them the papers sent with them—Want nurses—Saw their chapel.

"Went to St. Eustatia[7]; saw an innumerable company of girls catechised, in many bodies, perhaps 100 to a catechist—Boys taught at one time, girls at another—The sermon: the preacher wears a cap, which he takes off at *the name*—his action uniform, not very violent.

"*Monday, 30th October.*—We saw the library of St. Germain[8]—A very noble collection—*Codex Divinorum Officiorum*, 1459—a letter, square like that of the *Offices*, perhaps the same—The *Codex*, by Fust and Gernsheym—*Meursius*, 12 v. fol. —*Amadis*, in French, 3 vol. fol.—CATHOLICON *sine colophone*, but of 1460—Two other editions[9], one by ——— *Augustin. de Civitate Dei*, without name, date, or place, but of Fust's square letter as it seems.

"I dined with Col. Drumgould; had a pleasing afternoon.

"Some of the books of St. Germain's stand in presses from the wall, like those at Oxford.

"*Tuesday, 31st October.*—I lived at the Benedictines; meagre day; soup meagre, herrings, eels, both with sauce; fried fish; lentils, tasteless in themselves—In the library; where I found *Maffeus's de Historiâ Indicâ: Promontorium flectere, to double the Cape*—I parted very tenderly from the prior and Father Wilkes.

"*Maitre des Arts*, 2 y.—*Bacc. Theol.* 3 y.—*Licentiate*, 2 y.—*Doctor Th.* 2 y. in

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1 [Mrs. Strickland, the sister of Mr. Charles Townley, who happened to meet the party at Dieppe, and accompanied them to Paris. She introduced them to Madame du Bocage.—*Reynolds's Recollections.*—ED.]

2 [There was in France but one *Grand Chartreux*, the monastery near Grenoble, founded by St. Bruno, to the 13th prior of which St. Louis applied for an *off-set* of the order to be established in Paris, where he placed them in his chateau de *Vauvert*, which stood in the Rue d'Enfer. The good people of Paris believed that the chateau of Vauvert, before St. Louis had fixed the Carthusians there, was *haunted*, and thence the street was called Rue d'Enfer.—ED.]

3 [Sir George Colebrooke, see *ante*, v. i. p. 262.—ED.]

4 [The celebrated Admiral, afterwards Lord Rodney: he was residing abroad on account of pecuniary embarrassments, and, on the breaking out of the war in 1778, the Marshal Duc de Biron generously offered him a loan of a thousand louis d'ors, to enable him to return to take his part in the service of his country. See a letter of the Baron D'Holbach to Miss Wilkes, in *Wilkes's Correspondence*, vol. iv. p. 270.—ED.]

5 [There is a slight mistake here. Princes, ambassadors, marshals, and a few of the higher nobility, had *coureurs*, that is, *running footmen*. The word *avant-coureur* was commonly used in a moral sense. Johnson, no doubt, meant a *courier* who rode post.—ED.]

6 i. e. 18 *livres*. Two pair of white silk stockings were probably purchased.—MALONE.

7 [No doubt an error for *Eustatius*. He means the well-known parish church of *St. Eustache*.—ED.]

8 [St. Germain des Près, the too celebrated *abbaye*. Its library was said—after the king's library in Paris, and that of the Vatican—to be the richest in Europe in manuscripts.—ED.]

9 I have looked in vain into De Bure, Meerman, Mattaire, and other typographical books, for the two editions of the "*Catholicon*," which Dr. Johnson mentions here, with *names* which I cannot make out. I read "one by *Latinius*, one by *Boedinus*." I have deposited the original MS. in the British Museum, where the curious may see it. My grateful acknowledgments are due to Mr. Planta for the trouble he was pleased to take in aiding my researches.—BOSWELL.

all 9 years—For the Doctorate three disputations, *Major*, *Minor*, *Sorbonica*—Several colleges suppressed, and transferred to that which was the Jesuit's College.

"*Wednesday*, 1*st November*.—We left Paris—St. Denis, a large town: the church not very large, but the middle aisle is very lofty and awful—On the left are chapels built beyond the line of the wall, which destroyed the symmetry of the sides—The organ is higher above the pavement than I have ever seen—The gates are of brass—On the middle gate is the history of our Lord—The painted windows are historical, and said to be eminently beautiful—We were at another church belonging to a convent, of which the portal is a dome; we could not enter further, and it was almost dark.

"*Thursday*, 2*d November*.—We came this day to Chantilly, a seat belonging to the Prince of Condé—This place is eminently beautified by all varieties of waters starting up in fountains, falling in cascades, running in streams, and spread in lakes—The water seems to be too near the house—All this water is brought from a source or river three leagues off, by an artificial canal, which for one league is carried under ground—The house is magnificent—The cabinet seems well stocked; what I remember was, the jaws of a hippopotamus, and a young hippopotamus preserved, which, however, is so small, that I doubt its reality—It seems too hairy for an abortion, and too small for a mature birth—Nothing was [preserved] in spirits; all was dry—The dog; the deer; the ant-bear wit[1] long snout—The toucan, long broad beak—The stables were of very great length—The kennel had no scents—There was a mockery of a village—The menagerie had few animals[1]—Two faussans[2], or Brasilian weasels, spotted, very wild—There is a forest, and, I think, a park—I walked till I was very weary, and next morning felt my feet battered, and with pains in the toes.

"*Friday*, 3*d November*.—We came to Compeigne, a very large town, with a royal palace built round a pentagonal court—The court is raised upon vaults, and has, I suppose, an entry on one side by a gentle rise—Talk of painting—The church is not very large, but very elegant and splendid—I had at first great difficulty to walk, but motion grew continually easier—At night we came to Noyon, an episcopal city—The cathedral is very beautiful, the pillars alternately Gothick and Corinthian—We entered a very noble parochial church—Noyon is walled, and is said to be three miles round.

"*Saturday*, 4*th November*.—We rose very early, and came through St. Quintin to Cambray, not long after three—We went to an English nunnery, to give a letter to Father Welch, the confessor, who came to visit us in the evening.

"*Sunday*, 5*th November*.—We saw the Cathedral—It is very beautiful, with chapels on each side—The choir splendid—The balustrade in one part brass—The *Neff* very high and grand—The altar silver as far as it is seen—The vestments very splendid—At the Benedictines' church———"

Here his Journal[3] ends abruptly. Whether he wrote any more after this time, I know not; but probably not much, as he arrived in England about the 12th of November. These short notes of his tour, though they may seem minute taken singly make together a considerable mass of information, and exhibit such an ardour of inquiry and acuteness of examination, as I believe, are found in but few travellers, especially at an advanced age. They completely refute the idle notion which has been propagated, *that he could not see*[4]; and, if he had taken the trouble to revise

[1] The writing is so bad here, that the names of several of the animals could not be deciphered without much more acquaintance with natural history than I possess. Dr. Blagden, with his usual politeness, most obligingly examined the MS. To that gentleman, and to Dr. Gray, of the British Museum, who also very readily assisted me, I beg leave to express my best thanks.—BOSWELL.

[2] It is thus written by Johnson, from the French pronunciation of *fossane*. It should be observed, that the person who showed this menagerie was mistaken in supposing the *fossane* and the Brasilian weasel to be the same, the *fossane* being a different animal, and a native of Madagascar. I find them, however, upon one plate in Pennant's "Synopsis of Quadrupeds."—BOSWELL.

[3] My worthy and ingenious friend, Mr. Andrew Lumisden, by his accurate acquaintance with France, enabled me to make out many proper names which Dr. Johnson had written indistinctly, and sometimes spelt erroneously.—BOSWELL.

[4] [Miss Reynolds, who knew him longer, and saw him more constantly than Mr. Boswell, says, "Dr. Johnson's sight was so *very defective*, that he could scarcely distinguish the face of his most intimate acquaintance at half a yard, and in general it was observable, that his critical remarks on *dress*, &c. were the result of *very close* inspection of the object, partly from curiosity, and partly from a desire of exciting admiration of his perspicuity, of which he was not a little ambitious."—*Recollections*. And if we may believe Baretti's account to her, on their return, his defect of sight led him into many inaccuracies.—ED.]

and digest them, he undoubtedly could have expanded them into a very entertaining narrative.

[Mrs. Piozzi has preserved a few anecdotes of this tour. "Mr. Thrale loved prospects, and was mortified that his friend could not enjoy the sight of those different dispositions of wood and water, hill and valley, that travelling through England and France affords a man. But when he wished to point them out to his companion, 'Never heed such nonsense,' would be the reply: 'a blade of grass is always a blade of grass, whether in one country or another. Let us, if we *do* talk, talk about something: men and women are my subjects of inquiry; let us see how these differ from those we have left behind.'

Piozzi, p. 76, 77.

"When we were at Rouen together, he took a great fancy to the Abbé Roffette, with whom he conversed about the destruction of the order of jesuits, and condemned it loudly, as a blow to the general power of the church, and likely to be followed with many and dangerous innovations, which might at length become fatal to religion itself, and shake even the foundation of Christianity. The gentleman seemed to wonder and delight in his conversation; the talk was all in Latin, which both spoke fluently, and Dr. Johnson pronounced a long eulogium upon Milton with so much ardour, eloquence, and ingenuity, that the abbé rose from his seat and embraced him. My husband seeing them apparently so charmed with the company of each other, politely invited the abbé to England, intending to oblige his friend; who, instead of thanking, reprimanded him severely before the man, for such a sudden burst of tenderness towards a person he could know nothing at all of; and thus put a sudden finish to all his own and Mr. Thrale's entertainment, from the company of the Abbé Roffette.

"When at Versailles the people showed us the theatre. As we stood on the stage looking at some machinery for playhouse purposes—'Now we are here, what shall we act, Dr. Johnson?—The Englishman at Paris?' 'No, no,' replied he; 'we will try to act Harry the Fifth.' His dislike of the French was well known to both nations, I believe; but he applauded the number of their books and the graces of their style. 'They have few sentiments,' said he, 'but they express them neatly; they have little meat too, but they dress it well.'"]

When I met him in London the following year, the account which he gave me of his French tour, was, "Sir, I have seen all the visibilities of Paris, and around it; but to have formed an acquaintance with the people there would have required more time than I could stay. I was just beginning to creep into acquaintance by means of Colonel Drumgould, a very high man, sir, head of *L'Ecole Militaire*, a most complete character, for he had first been a professor of rhetorick, and then became a soldier. And, sir, I was very kindly treated by the English Benedictines, and have a cell appropriated to me in their convent."

He observed, "The great in France live very magnificently, but the rest very miserably. There is no happy middle state as in England[1]. The shops of Paris are mean; the meat in the market is such as would not be sent to a gaol in England; and Mr. Thrale justly observed, that the cookery of the French was forced upon them by necessity; for they could not eat their meat, unless they added some taste to it. The French are an indelicate people; they will spit upon any place. At Madame [Du Bocage's,] a literary lady of rank, the footman took the sugar in his fingers, and threw it into my coffee. I was going to put it aside; but hearing it was made on purpose for me, I even tasted Tom's fingers. The same lady would needs make tea *à l'Angloise*. The spout of the teapot did not pour freely; she bade the footman blow into it[2]. France is worse than Scotland in every thing but climate. Nature has done more for the French; but they have done less for themselves than the Scotch have done[3]."

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[1] [See *ante*, p. 13.—Ed.]

[2] [Nay, she actually performed the operation herself. Mrs. Piozzi says, "I recollect one fine lady in France, who entertained us very splendidly, put her mouth to the teapot, and blew in the spout when it would not pour freely. My maid Peggy would not have touched the tea after such an operation."—*Letters*, v. ii. p. 247. Miss Reynolds's "*Recollections*" preserve this story as told her by Baretti, who was of the party: "Going one day to drink tea with Madame du Bocage, she happened to produce an old china teapot, which Mrs. Strickland, who made the tea, could not make pour: '*Soufflez, soufflez, madame, dedans*,' cried Madame du Bocage, '*il se rectifie immediatement; essayez, je vous en prie.*' The servant then thinking that Mrs. Strickland did not understand what his lady said, took up the teapot to *rectify* it, and Mrs. Strickland had quite a struggle to prevent his blowing into the spout. Madame du Bocage all this while had not the least idea of its being any impropriety, and wondered at Mrs. Strickland's stupidity. She came over to the latter, caught up the teapot, and blew into the spout with all her might; then finding it pour, she held it up in triumph, and repeatedly exclaimed, '*Voilà, voilà, j'ai regagné l'honneur de ma theiére.*' She had no sugar-tongs, and said something that showed she expected Mrs. Strickland to use her fingers to sweeten the cups. '*Madame, je n'oserois. Oh mon Dieu! quel grand quan-quan les Anglois font de peu de chose.*"—Ed.]

[3] In a letter to a friend, written a few days after his return from France, he says, "The

it happened that Foote was at Paris at the same time with Dr. Johnson, and his description of my friend while there was abundantly ludicrous. He told me, that the French were quite astonished at his figure and manner, and at his dress, which he obstinately continued exactly as in London[1]; —his brown clothes, black stockings, and plain shirt. He mentioned, that an Irish gentleman said to Johnson, "Sir, you have not seen the best French players." JOHNSON. "Players, sir! I look on them as no better than creatures set upon tables and joint stools, to make faces and produce laughter, like dancing dogs." "But, sir, you will allow that some players are better than others?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, as some dogs dance better than others."

Reyn. Recoll. [In the same spirit, but of more vehemence and greater injustice, were his statements to Sir Joshua and Miss Reynolds, who has noted them in her *Recollections*.

JOHNSON. "The French, sir, are a very silly people. They have no common life. Nothing but the two ends, beggary and nobility. Sir, they are made up in every thing of two extremes. They have no common sense, they have no common manners, no common learning—gross ignorance, or *les belles lettres*." A LADY. [Mrs. Thrale]. "Indeed, even in their dress—their frippery finery, and their beggarly coarse linen. They had, I thought, no politeness; their civilities never indicated more good-will than the talk of a parrot, indiscriminately using the same set of superlative phrases, "*à la merveille!*" to every one alike. They really seemed to have no expressions for sincerity and truth." JOHNSON. "They are much behind-hand, stupid, ignorant creatures. At Fontainbleau I saw a horse-race—every thing was wrong; the heaviest weight was put upon the weakest horse, and all the jockeys wore the same colour coat[2]." A GENTLEMAN. "Had you any acquaintance in Paris?" JOHNSON. "No, I did not stay long enough to make any[3]. I spoke only Latin, and I could not have much conversation. There is no good in letting the French have a superiority over you every word you speak. Baretti was sometimes displeased with us for not liking the French." MISS REYNOLDS. "Perhaps he had a kind of partiality for that country, because it was in the way to Italy, and perhaps their manners resembled the Italians." JOHNSON. "No. He was the showman, and we did not like his show; that was all."]

While Johnson was in France, he was generally very resolute in speaking Latin. It was a maxim with him that a man should not let himself down by speaking a language which he speaks imperfectly. Indeed, we must have often observed how in-

French have a clear air and a fruitful soil; but their mode of common life is gross and incommodious, and disgusting. I am come home convinced that no improvement of general use is to be found among them."—MALONE.

1 Mr. Foote seems to have *embellished* a little in saying that Johnson did not alter his dress at Paris; as in his journal is a memorandum about white stockings, wig, and hat. In another place we are told that "during his travels in France he was furnished with a French-made wig of handsome construction." That Johnson was not inattentive to his appearance is certain, from a circumstance related by Mr. Steevens, and inserted by Mr. Boswell, between June 15 and June 22, 1784.—J. BLAKEWAY. Mr. Blakeway's observation is further confirmed by a note in Johnson's diary (quoted by Sir John Hawkins, "Life of Johnson," p. 517), by which it appears that he had laid out thirty pounds in clothes for his French journey.—MALONE.

2 ["On telling Mr. Baretti of the proof that Johnson gave of the stupidity of the French in the management of their horse-races; that all the jockeys wore the same colour coat, &c., he said that was 'like Johnson's remarks—He could not see.'—But it was observed that he could inquire·—'yes,' and it was by the answers he received that he was misled, for he asked what did the first jockey wear? answer, green; what the second? green; what the third? green, which was true; but, then, the greens were all different greens, and very easily distinguished.—Johnson was perpetually making mistakes; so, on going to Fontainbleau, when we were about three-fourths of the way, he exclaimed with amazement, that now we were between Paris and the King of France's court, and yet we had not met one carriage coming from thence, or even one going thither! On which all the company in the coach burst out a laughing, and immediately cried out, 'Look, look, there is a coach gone by, there is a chariot, there is a postchaise!" I dare say we saw a hundred carriages, at least, that were going to or coming from Fontainbleau."—*Baretti in Miss Reynolds's Recollections.* It should be added, however, that Miss Reynolds thought that Baretti returned from this tour with some dislike of Johnson, and Johnson not without some coolness towards Baretti, on account, as Baretti said, of Madame du Bocage having paid more attention to him than to Johnson; but this latter assertion could not be true, for Johnson, in his letter to Mr. Levet (*ante*, p. 9), speaks *highly and cordially of* Baretti *many days after* the supposed offence. Miss Reynolds adds that the final rupture between Johnson and Baretti was occasioned by "a most audacious falsehood that the latter told Johnson, that he had beaten Omiah at chess, at Sir Joshua's; for the reverse was the fact." This produced contradiction, dispute, and a violent quarrel, which never was completely made up.—ED.]

3 [This accounts (not quite satisfactorily, perhaps, in a moral view) for the violent prejudices and consequent misrepresentations which his conversation on his return exhibited.—ED.]

feriour, how much like a child a man appears, who speaks a broken tongue. When Sir Joshua Reynolds, at one of the dinners of the royal academy, presented him to a Frenchman of great distinction, he would not deign to speak French, but talked Latin, though his excellency did not understand it, owing, perhaps, to Johnson's English pronunciation: yet upon another occasion he was observed to speak French to a Frenchman of high rank, who spoke English; and being asked the reason, with some expression of surprise, he answered, "because I think my French is as good as his English." Though Johnson understood French perfectly, he could not speak it readily, as I have observed at his first interview with General Paoli, in 1769; yet he wrote it, I imagine, pretty well, as appears from some of his letters in Mrs. Piozzi's collection, of which I shall transcribe one:

"A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE ———[1].

"16th May, 1771.

"*Oui, madame, le moment est arrivé, et il faut que je parte. Mais pourquoi faut il partir? Est ce que je m'ennuye? Je m'ennuyerai ailleurs. Est ce que je cherche ou quelque plaisir, ou quelque soulagement? Je ne cherche rien, je n'espere rien. Aller voir ce que j'ai vû, etre un peu rejoué*[2], *un peu degouté, me resouvenir que la vie se passe, et qu'elle se passe en vain, me plaindre de moi, m'endurcir aux dehors; voici le tout de ce qu'on compte pour les delices de l'année. Que Dieu vous donne, madame, tous les agrémens de la vie, avec un esprit qui peut en jour sans s'y livrer trop*[3]."

He spoke Latin with wonderful fluency and elegance. When Pere Boscovich[4] was in England, Johnson dined in company with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, and at Dr. Douglas's, now Bishop of Salisbury. Upon both occasions that celebrated foreigner expressed his astonishment at Johnson's Latin conversation. [The conversation at Dr. Douglas's was at first mostly in French. Johnson, though thoroughly versed in that language, and a professed admirer of Boileau and La Bruyere, did not understand its pronunciation, nor could he speak it himself with propriety. For the rest of the evening the talk was in Latin. Boscovich had a ready current flow of that flimsy phraseology with which a priest may travel through Italy, Spain, and Germany. Johnson scorned what he called colloquial barbarisms. It was his pride to speak his best. He went on, after a little practice, with as much facility as if it was his native tongue. One sentence Mr. Murphy remembered. Observing that Fontenelle at first opposed the Newtonian philosophy, and embraced it afterwards, his words were: *Fontinellus, ni fallor, in extremâ senectute, fuit transfuga ad castra Newtoniana*[5].] When at Paris, Johnson thus characterised Voltaire to Freron the journalist: "*Vir est acerrimi ingenii et paucarum literarum.*" Mur. Life, p 91.

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 5th Dec. 1775.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Alexander Maclean, the young laird of Col, being to set out to-morrow for London, I give him this letter to introduce him to your acquaintance. The kindness which you and I experienced from his brother, whose unfortunate death we sincerely lament, will make us always desirous to show attention to any branch of the family. Indeed, you have so much of the true Highland cordiality, that I am sure you would have thought me to blame if I

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 44, where it is conjectured that this note was addressed to Madame de Boufflers, which the editor now sees reason to doubt. The date in Mrs. Piozzi's collection, where it first appeared, was 16th *May*, 1771. In Mr. Boswell's first edition it became 16th *July*, 1771; and in *all* the later editions, by a more elaborate error, 16th *July*, 1775. These two latter dates are manifest mistakes. Madame de Boufflers' visit was in 1769, and in the May of 1771 Johnson was in London, without any intention of leaving it—so that the editor is wholly at a loss to guess to whom or on what occasion the letter was written. Perhaps it was an *exercise*.—ED.]

[2] [This letter, notwithstanding some faults, is very tolerable French; *rejoué* is probably a printer's error for *rejoui*, and *peut* should be *puisse*.—ED.]

[3] [Here followed the anecdote relative to Madame de Boufflers, transferred to v. i. p. 88.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 170. Boscovich was a jesuit, born at Ragusa in 1711, who first introduced the Newtonian philosophy into Italy. He visited London in 1760, and was there elected into the Royal Society. He died in 1787.—ED.]

[5] [This phrase seems rather too pompous for the occasion. Johnson had probably in his mind a passage in Seneca, quoted in *Menagiana* (v. ii. p. 46), "Sénéque voulant dire qu'il profitait de ce qu'il y avait de bon dans les auteurs dit, 'Solon sæpe in aliena *castra* transire; non tanquam *transfuga*, sed tanquam explorator;" and this is rendered the more probable because in the same volume of the *Menagiana*, and within a few pages of each other, are found two other Latin quotations, which Johnson has made use of, the one from Thuanus, "*Fami non famæ* scribere existimatus Xylandrus." See *ante*, vol. i. p. 83, *n.* The other from J. C. Scaliger, "Homo ex alieno ingenio poeta, ex suo tantum versificator:" which is the motto Johnson prefixed to his version of the Messiah: *ante*, v. i. p. 21 ED.]

had neglected to recommend to you this Hebridean prince, in whose island we were hospitably entertained. I ever am, with respectful attachment, my dear sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

Mr. Maclean returned with the most agreeable accounts of the polite attention with which he was received by Dr. Johnson.

In the course of the year Dr. Burney informs me that "he very frequently met Dr. Johnson at Mr. Thrale's, at Streatham, where they had many long conversations, often sitting up as long as the fire and candles lasted, and much longer than the patience of the servants subsisted."

A few of Johnson's sayings, which that gentleman recollects, shall here be inserted.

Burney. "I never take a nap after dinner but when I have had a bad night, and then the nap takes me."

"The writer of an epitaph should not be considered as saying nothing but what is strictly true. Allowance must be made for some degree of exaggerated praise. In lapidary inscriptions a man is not upon oath."

"There is now less flogging in our great schools than formerly, but then less is learned there; so that what the boys get at one end they lose at the other."

"More is learned in publick than in private schools, from emulation; there is the collision of mind with mind, or the radiation of many minds pointing to one centre. Though few boys make their own exercises, yet if a good exercise is given up, out of a great number of boys, it is made by somebody."

"I hate by-roads in education. Education is as well known, and has long been as well known as ever it can be. Endeavouring to make children prematurely wise is useless labour. Suppose they have more knowledge at five or six years old than other children, what use can be made of it? It will be lost before it is wanted, and the waste of so much time and labour of the teacher can never be repaid. Too much is expected from precocity, and too little performed. Miss ——[1] was an instance of early cultivation, but in what did it terminate? In marrying a little presbyterian parson, who keeps an infant boarding-school, so that all her employment now is,

'To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.'

She tells the children, 'This is a cat, and that is a dog, with four legs, and a tail; see there! you are much better than a cat or a dog, for you can speak.' If I had bestowed such an education on a daughter, and had discovered that she thought of marrying such a fellow, I would have sent her to the *Congress*."

"After having talked slightingly of musick, he was observed to listen very attentively while Miss Thrale played on the harpsichord; and with eagerness he called to her, 'Why don't you dash away like Burney?' Dr. Burney upon this said to him, 'I believe, sir, we shall make a musician of you at last.' Johnson with candid complacency replied, 'Sir, I shall be glad to have a new sense given to me.'"

"He had come down one morning to the breakfast-room, and been a considerable time by himself before any body appeared. When on a subsequent day he was twitted by Mrs. Thrale for being very late, which he generally was, he defended himself by alluding to the extraordinary morning, when he had been too early. 'Madam, I do not like to come down to *vacuity*.'"

"Dr. Burney having remarked that Mr. Garrick was beginning to look old, he said, 'Why, sir, you are not to wonder at that; no man's face has had more wear and tear.'"

[Mrs. Montagu's recent kindness to Miss Williams was not lost on Johnson. His letters to that lady became more elaborately respectful, and his subsequent mention of her took, as we shall see, a high tone of panegyric[2].] Ed.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"15th Dec. 1775

"MADAM,—Having, after my return from a little ramble to France, passed some time in the country, I did not hear, till I was told by Miss Reynolds, that you were in town; and when I did hear it, I heard likewise that you were ill. To have you detained among us by sickness is to enjoy your presence at too dear a rate. I suffer myself to be flattered with hope that only half the intelligence is now true, and that you are now so well as to be able to leave us, and so kind as not to be willing. —I am, madam, your most humble servant, Montag MSS.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"17th Dec. 1775.

"MADAM,—All that the esteem and reverence of mankind can give you has been long in your possession, and the little that I can add to the voice of nations will not much exalt; of that little, however, you are, I hope, very certain. Montag MSS.

"I wonder, madam, if you remember

[1] [Miss Letitia Aiken, who married Mr. Barbauld, and published "*Easy Lessons for Children*."—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*. v. i. p. 152, and vol. i. p. 405, *n*. and *post*, *sub* 26th April, 1776.—Ed.]

Col in the Hebrides? The brother and heir of poor *Col* has just been to visit me, and I have engaged to dine with him on Thursday. I do not know his lodging, and cannot send him a message, and must therefore suspend the honour which you are pleased to offer to, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"Thursday, 21st Dec. 1775.

Montag. MSS. "MADAM,—I know not when any letter has given me so much pleasure or vexation as that which I had yesterday the honour of receiving. That you, madam, should wish for my company is surely a sufficient reason for being pleased;—that I should delay twice, what I had so little right to expect even once, has so bad an appearance, that I can only hope to have it thought that I am ashamed.

"You have kindly allowed me to name a day. Will you be pleased, madam, to accept of me any day after Tuesday? Till I am favoured with your answer, or despair of so much condescension, I shall suffer no engagement to fasten itself upon me.—I am, madam, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

Not having heard from him for a longer time than I supposed he would be silent, I wrote to him Dec. 18, not in good spirits:

"Sometimes I have been afraid that the cold which has gone over Europe this year like a sort of pestilence has seized you severely: sometimes my imagination, which is upon occasions prolifick of evil, hath figured that you may have somehow taken offence at some part of my conduct."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"23d Dec. 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—Never dream of any offence. How should you offend me? I consider your friendship as a possession, which I intend to hold till you take it from me, and to lament if ever by my fault I should lose it. However, when such suspicions find their way into your mind, always give them vent; I shall make haste to disperse them; but hinder their first ingress if you can. Consider such thoughts as morbid.

"Such illness as may excuse my omission to Lord Hailes, I cannot honestly plead. I have been hindered, I know not how, by a succession of petty obstructions. I hope to mend immediately, and to send next post to his lordship. Mr. Thrale would have written to you if I had omitted; he sends his compliments, and wishes to see you.

"You and your lady will now have no more wrangling about feudal inheritance. How does the young Laird of Auchinleck[1] I suppose Miss Veronica is grown a reader and discourser.

"I have just now got a cough, but it has never yet hindered me from sleeping; I have had quieter nights than are common with me.

"I cannot but rejoice that Joseph[1] has had the wit to find the way back. He is a fine fellow, and one of the best travellers in the world.

"Young *Col* brought me your letter. He is a very pleasing youth. I took him two days ago to the Mitre, and we dined together. I was as civil as I had the means of being.

"I have had a letter from *Rasay*, acknowledging, with great appearance of satisfaction, the insertion in the Edinburg paper. I am very glad that it was done.

"My compliments to Mrs. Boswell, who does not love me; and of all the rest, I need only send them to those that do; and I am afraid it will give you very little trouble to distribute them.—I am, my dear, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. GRANGER[2].

(About 1775, but has no date.)

"SIR,—When I returned from the country I found your letter; and would very gladly have done what you desire, had it been in my power. Mr. Farmer is, I am confident, mistaken in supposing that he gave me any such pamphlet or cut. should as soon have suspected myself, as Mr. Farmer, of forgetfulness; but that I do not know, except from your letter, the name of Arthur O'Toole, nor recollect that I ever heard of it before. I think it impossible that I should have suffered such a total obliteration from my mind of any thing which was ever there. This at least is certain; that I do not know of any such pamphlet; and equally certain I desire you to think it, that if I had it, you should immediately receive it from, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

In 1776, Johnson wrote, so far as I can discover, nothing for the publick: but that his mind was still ardent, and fraught with generous wishes to attain to still higher degrees of literary excellence, is proved by his private notes of this year, which I shall insert in their proper place.

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1 Joseph Ritter, a Bohemian, who was in my service many years, and attended Dr. Johnson and me in our tour to the Hebrides. After having left me for some time, he had now returned to me.—BOSWELL.

2 [The author of the "Biographical History of England."—ED.]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"10th January, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I have at last sent you all Lord Hailes's papers. While I was in France, I looked very often into Henault; but Lord Hailes, in my opinion, leaves him far and far behind. Why I did not despatch so short a perusal sooner, when I look back, I am utterly unable to discover; but human moments are stolen away by a thousand petty impediments which leave no trace behind them. I have been afflicted, through the whole Christmas, with the general disorder, of which the worst effect was a cough, which is now much mitigated, though the country, on which I look from a window at Streatham, is now covered with a deep snow. Mrs. Williams is very ill: every body else is as usual.

"Among the papers I found a letter to you, which I think you had not opened; and a paper[1] for 'The Chronicle,' which I suppose it not necessary now to insert. I return them both.

"I have, within these few days, had the honour of receiving Lord Hailes's first volume, for which I return my most respectful thanks.

"I wish you, my dearest friend, and your haughty lady, (for I know she does not love me), and the young ladies, and the young laird, all happiness. Teach the young gentleman, in spite of his mamma, to think and speak well of, sir, your affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

At this time was in agitation a matter of great consequence to me and my family, which I should not obtrude upon the world, were it not that the part which Dr. Johnson's friendship for me made him take in it was the occasion of an exertion of his abilities, which it would be injustice to conceal. That what he wrote upon the subject may be understood, it is necessary to give a state of the question, which I shall do as briefly as I can.

In the year 1504, the barony or manour of Auchinleck (pronounced *Affleck*) in Ayrshire, which belonged to a family of the same name with the lands, having fallen to the crown by forfeiture, James the Fourth, King of Scotland, granted it to Thomas Boswell, a branch of an ancient family in the county of Fife, styling him in the charter, "*dilecto familiari nostro*;" and assigning as the cause of the grant, "*pro bono et fideli servitio nobis præstito.*" Thomas Boswell was slain in battle, fighting along with his sovereign, at the fatal field of Flodden, in 1513.

From this very honourable founder of our family, the estate was transmitted, in a direct series of heirs-male, to David Boswell, my father's great-grand uncle, who had no sons, but four daughters, who were all respectably married, the eldest to Lord Cathcart.

David Boswell, being resolute in the military feudal principle of continuing the male succession, passed by his daughters, and settled the estate on his nephew by his next brother, who approved of the deed, and renounced any pretensions which he might possibly have, in preference to his son. But the estate having been burthened with large portions to the daughters, and other debts, it was necessary for the nephew to sell a considerable part of it, and what remained was still much encumbered.

The frugality of the nephew preserved, and, in some degree, relieved the estate. His son, my grand-father, an eminent lawyer, not only re-purchased a great part of what had been sold, but acquired other lands; and my father, who was one of the judges of Scotland, and had added considerably to the estate, now signified his inclination to take the privilege allowed by our law[2], to secure it to his family in perpetuity by an entail, which, on account of his marriage articles, could not be done without my consent.

In the plan of entailing the estate, I heartily concurred with him, though I was the first to be restrained by it; but we unhappily differed as to the series of heirs which should be established, or, in the language of our law, called to the succession. My father had declared a predilection for heirs-general, that is, males and females indiscriminately. He was willing, however, that all males descending from his grand-father should be preferred to females; but would not extend that privilege to males deriving their descent from a higher source. I, on the other hand, had a zealous partiality for heirs-male, however remote, which I maintained by arguments, which appeared to me to have considerable weight[3]. And

[1] [No doubt an advertisement of apology to *Rasay*.—ED.]

[2] Acts of Parliament of Scotland, 1685, cap. 22.—BOSWELL.

[3] As first, the opinion of some distinguished naturalists, that our species is transmitted through males only, the female being all along no more than a *nidus*, or nurse, as Mother Earth is to plants of every sort; which notion seems to be confirmed by that text of Scripture, "He was yet *in the loins of his* FATHER, when Melchisedeck met him" (Heb. vii. 10), and consequently, that a man's grandson by a daughter, instead of being his *surest* descendant, as is vulgarly said, has, in reality, no connexion whatever with his blood. And, secondly, independent of this theory (which, if true, should completely exclude heirs-general), that if the preference of a male to a female, without regard to primogeniture) as a

in the particular case of our family, I apprehended that we were under an implied obligation, in honour and good faith, to transmit the estate by the same tenure which he held it, which was as heirs-male, excluding nearer females. I therefore, as I thought conscientiously, objected to my father's scheme.

My opposition was very displeasing to my father, who was entitled to great respect and deference; and I had reason to apprehend disagreeable consequences from my non-compliance with his wishes. After much perplexity and uneasiness, I wrote to Dr. Johnson, stating the case, with all its difficulties, at full length, and earnestly requesting that he would consider it at leisure, and favour me with his friendly opinion and advice.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 15th January, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I was much impressed by your letter, and if I can form upon your case any resolution satisfactory to myself, will very gladly impart it: but whether I am equal to it, I do not know. It is a case compounded of law and justice, and requires a mind versed in juridical disquisitions. Could not you tell your whole mind to Lord Hailes? He is, you know, both a Christian and a lawyer. I suppose he is above partiality, and above loquacity, and, I believe, he will not think the time lost in which he may quiet a disturbed, or settle a wavering mind. Write to me as any thing occurs to you; and if I find myself stopped by want of facts necessary to be known, I will make inquiries of you as my doubts arise.

"If your former resolutions should be found only fanciful, you decide rightly in judging that your father's fancies may claim the preference; but whether they are fanciful or rational is the question. I really think Lord Hailes could help us.

"Make my compliments to dear Mrs. Boswell; and tell her, that I hope to be wanting in nothing that I can contribute to bring you all out of your troubles. I am, dear sir, most affectionately, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"3d Feb. 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I am going to write upon a question which requires more knowledge of local law, and more acquaintance with the general rules of inheritance, than I can claim; but I write, because you request it.

"Land is, like any other possession, by natural right wholly in the power of its present owner; and may be sold, given, or bequeathed, absolutely or conditionally, as judgment shall direct or passion incite.

"But natural right would avail little without the protection of law; and the primary notion of law is restraint in the exercise of natural right. A man is therefore in society not fully master of what he calls his own, but he still retains all the power which law does not take from him.

"In the exercise of the right which law either leaves or gives, regard is to be paid to moral obligations.

"Of the estate which we are now considering, your father still retains such possession, with such power over it, that he can sell it, and do with the money what he will, without any legal impediment. But when he extends his power beyond his own life, by settling the order of succession, the law makes your consent necessary.

"Let us suppose that he sells the land to risk the money in some specious adventure, and in that adventure loses the whole; his posterity would be disappointed; but they could not think themselves injured or robbed. If he spent it upon vice or pleasure, his successors could only call him vicious and voluptuous; they could not say that he was injurious or unjust.

"He that may do more may do less. He that by selling or squandering may disinherit a whole family, may certainly disinherit part by a partial settlement.

"Laws are formed by the manners and exigencies of particular times, and it is but accidental that they last longer than their causes: the limitation of feudal succession to the male arose from the obligation of the tenant to attend his chief in war.

"As times and opinions are always changing, I know not whether it be not usurpation

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son, though much younger, nay even a grandson by a son, to a daughter), be once admitted, as it universally is, it must be equally reasonable and proper in the most remote degree of descent from an original proprietor of an estate, as in the nearest; because, however distant from the representative at the time, that remote heir-male, upon the failure of those nearer to the *original proprietor* than he is, becomes in fact the nearest male to *him*, and is, therefore, preferable as *his* representative, to a female descendant. A little extension of mind will enable us easily to perceive that a son's son, in continuation to whatever length of time, is preferable to a son's daughter, in the succession to an ancient inheritance; in which regard should be had to the representation of the original proprietor, and not to that of one of his descendants. I am aware of Blackstone's admirable demonstration of the reasonableness of the legal succession, upon the principle of there being the greatest probability that the nearest heir of the person who last dies proprietor of an estate is of the blood of the first purchaser. But supposing a pedigree to be carefully authenticated through all its branches, instead of mere *probability* there will be a *certainty* that *the nearest heir-male, at whatever period*, has the same right of blood with the first heir-male, namely, *the original purchaser's eldest son*.—BOSWELL.

to prescribe rules to posterity, by presuming to judge of what we cannot know; and I know not whether I fully approve either your design or your father's, to limit that succession which descended to you unlimited. If we are to leave *sartum tectum* to posterity, what we have without any merit of our own received from our ancestors, should not choice and free-will be kept unviolated? Is land to be treated with more reverence than liberty? If this consideration should restrain your father from disinheriting some of the males, does it leave you the power of disinheriting all the females?

"Can the possessor of a feudal estate make any will? Can he appoint, out of the inheritance, any portion to his daughters? There seems to be a very shadowy difference between the power of leaving land, and of leaving money to be raised from land; between leaving an estate to females, and leaving the male heir, in effect, only their steward.

"Suppose at one time a law that allowed only males to inherit, and during the continuance of this law many estates to have descended, passing by the females, to remoter heirs. Suppose afterwards the law repealed in correspondence with a change of manners, and women made capable of inheritance; would not then the tenure of estates be changed? Could the women have no benefit from a law made in their favour? Must they be passed by upon moral principles forever, because they were once excluded by a legal prohibition? Or may that which passed only to males by one law, pass likewise to females by another?

"You mention your resolution to maintain the right of your brothers[1]: I do not see how any of their rights are invaded.

"As your whole difficulty arises from the act of your ancestor, who diverted the succession from the females, you inquire, very properly, what were his motives, and what was his intention: for you certainly are not bound by his act more than he intended to bind you, nor hold your land on harder or stricter terms than those on which it was granted.

"Intentions must be gathered from acts. When he left the estate to his nephew, by excluding his daughters, was it, or was it not in his power to have perpetuated the succession to the males? If he could have done it, he seems to have shown by omitting it, that he did not desire it to be done, and, upon your own principles, you will not easily prove your right to destroy that capacity of succession which your ancestors have left.

"If your ancestor had not the power of making a perpetual settlement; and if, therefore, we cannot judge distinctly of his intentions, yet his act can only be considered as an example; it makes not an obligation. And, as you observe, he set no example of rigorous adherence to the line of succession. He that overlooked a brother, would not wonder that little regard is shown to remote relations.

"As the rules of succession are, in a great part, purely legal, no man can be supposed to bequeath any thing, but upon legal terms: he can grant no power which the law denies; and if he makes no special and definite limitation, he confers all the power which the law allows.

"Your ancestor, for some reason, disinherited his daughters; but it no more follows that he intended this act as a rule for posterity, than the disinheriting of his brother.

"If, therefore, you ask by what right your father admits daughters to inheritance, ask yourself, first, by what right you require them to be excluded?

"It appears, upon reflection, that your father excludes nobody; he only admits nearer females to inherit before males more remote; and the exclusion is purely consequential.

"These, dear sir, are my thoughts, immethodical and deliberative; but, perhaps, you may find in them some glimmering of evidence.

"I cannot, however, but again recommend to you a conference with Lord Hailes, whom you know to be both a lawyer and a Christian.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, though she does not love me. I am, sir, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I had followed his recommendation and consulted Lord Hailes, who upon this subject had a firm opinion contrary to mine. His lordship obligingly took the trouble to write me a letter, in which he discussed, with legal and historical learning, the points in which I saw much difficulty, maintaining that "the succession of heirs-general was the succession, by the law of Scotland, from the throne to the cottage, as far as we can learn it by record;" observing that the estate of our family had not been limited to heirs-male; and that though an heir-male had in one instance been chosen in preference to nearer females, that had been an arbitrary act, which had seemed to be best in the embarrassed state of affairs at that time: and the fact was, that upon a fair computation of the value of land and money at the time, applied to the estate and the burthens upon it, there was nothing given the heirs male but the skeleton of an estate. "Th

[1] Which term I applied to all the heirs male. —BOSWELL.

plea of conscience," said his lordship, "which you put, is a most respectable one, especially when *conscience* and *self* are on different sides. But I think that conscience is not well informed, and that *self* and *she* ought on this occasion to be of a side."

This letter, which had considerable influence upon my mind, I sent to Dr. Johnson, begging to hear from him again upon this interesting question.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"9th February, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—Having not any acquaintance with the laws or customs of Scotland, I endeavoured to consider your question upon general principles, and found nothing of much validity that I could oppose to this position: 'He who inherits a fief unlimited by his ancestors inherits the power of limiting it according to his own judgment or opinion.' If this be true, you may join with your father.

"Further consideration produces another conclusion: 'He who receives a fief unlimited by his ancestors gives his heirs some reason to complain if he does not transmit it unlimited to posterity. For why should he make the state of others worse than his own, without a reason?' If this be true, though neither you nor your father are about to do what is quite right, but as your father violates (I think,) the legal succession least, he seems to be nearer the right than yourself.

"It cannot but occur that 'Women have natural and equitable claims as well as men, and these claims are not to be capriciously or lightly superseded or infringed.' When fiefs implied military service, it is easily discerned why females could not inherit them, but that reason is now at an end. As manners make laws, manners likewise repeal them.

"These are the general conclusions which I have attained. None of them are very favourable to your scheme of entail, nor perhaps to any scheme. My observation, that only he who acquires an estate may bequeath it capriciously[1], if it contains any conviction, includes this position likewise, that only he who acquires an estate may entail it capriciously. But I think it may be safely presumed, that 'he who inherits an estate, inherits all the power legally concomitant;' and that 'He who gives or leaves unlimited an estate legally limitable, must be presumed to give that power of limitation which he omitted to take away, and to commit future contingencies to future prudence.' In these two positions I believe Lord Hailes will advise you to rest; every other notion of possession seems to me full of difficulties, and embarrassed with scruples.

"If these axioms be allowed, you have arrived now at full liberty without the help of particular circumstances, which, however, have in your case great weight. You very rightly observe, that he who passing by his brother gave the inheritance to his nephew, could limit no more than he gave; and by Lord Hailes's estimate of fourteen years' purchase, what he gave was no more than you may easily entail according to your own opinion, if that opinion should finally prevail.

"Lord Hailes's suspicion that entails are encroachments on the dominion of Providence, may be extended to all hereditary privileges and all permanent institutions; I do not see why it may not be extended to any provision for the present hour, since all care about futurity proceeds upon a supposition, that we know at least in some degree what will be future. Of the future we certainly know nothing; but we may form conjectures from the past; and the power of forming conjectures includes, in my opinion, the duty of acting in conformity to that probability, which we discover. Providence gives the power, of which reason teaches the use. I am, dear sir, your most faithful servant, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"I hope I shall get some ground now with Mrs. Boswell: make my compliments to her, and to the little people.

"Don't burn papers; they may be safe enough in your own box; you will wish to see them hereafter."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"15th February, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—To the letters which I have written about your great question I have nothing to add. If your conscience is satisfied, you have now only your prudence to consult. I long for a letter, that I may know how this troublesome and vexatious question is at last decided[2]. I hope that it will at last end well. Lord Hailes's letter was very friendly, and very seasonable, but I think his aversion from entails

[1] I had reminded him of his observation, mentioned, vol. i. p. 321.—BOSWELL.

[2] The entail framed by my father with various judicious clauses was settled by him and me, settling the estate upon the heirs male of his grandfather, which I found had been already done by my grandfather, imperfectly, but so as to be defeated only by selling the lands. I was freed by Dr. Johnson from scruples of conscientious obligation, and could, therefore, gratify my father. But my opinion and partiality for male succession, in its full extent, remained unshaken. Yet let me not be thought harsh or unkind to daughters; for my notion is, that they should be treated with great affection and tenderness, and always participate of the prosperity of the family.—BOSWELL.

has something in it like superstition. Providence is not counteracted by any means which Providence puts into our power. The continuance and propagation of families makes a great part of the Jewish law, and is by no means prohibited in the Christian institution, though the necessity of it continues no longer. Hereditary tenures are established in all civilized countries, and are accompanied in most with hereditary authority. Sir William Temple considers our constitution as defective, that there is not an unalienable estate in land connected with a peerage: and Lord Bacon mentions as a proof that the Turks are barbarians, their want of *stirpes*, as he calls them, or hereditary rank. Do not let your mind, when it is freed from the supposed necessity of a rigorous entail, be entangled with contrary objections, and think all entails unlawful, till you have cogent arguments, which I believe you will never find. I am afraid of scruples.

"I have now sent all Lord Hailes's papers; part I found hidden in a drawer in which I had laid them for security, and had forgotten them. Part of these are written twice; I have returned both the copies. Part I had read before.

"Be so kind as to return Lord Hailes my most respectful thanks for his first volume: his accuracy strikes me with wonder; his narrative is far superior to that of Henault, as I have formerly mentioned.

"I am afraid that the trouble which my irregularity and delay has cost him is greater, far greater, than any good that I can do him will ever recompense; but if I have any more copy, I will try to do better.

"Pray let me know if Mrs. Boswell is friends with me, and pay my respects to Veronica, and Euphemia, and Alexander. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 20th Feb. 1776.

* * * * * *

"YOU have illuminated my mind, and relieved me from imaginary shackles of conscientious obligation. Were it necessary, I could immediately join in an entail upon the series of heirs approved by my father; but it is better not to act too suddenly."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. BOSWELL.

"24th February, 1776.

DEAR SIR,—I am glad that what I could think or say has at all contributed to quiet your thoughts. Your resolution not to act, till your opinion is confirmed by more deliberation, is very just. If you have been scrupulous, do not be rash. I hope that as you think more, and take opportunities of talking with men intelligent in questions of property, you will be able to free yourself from every difficulty.

"When I wrote last, I sent, I think, ten packets. Did you receive them all?

"You must tell Mrs. Boswell that I suspected her to have written without your knowledge[1], and therefore did not return any answer, lest a clandestine correspondence should have been perniciously discovered. I will write to her soon. * *
I am, dear sir, most affectionately yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Having communicated to Lord Hailes what Dr. Johnson wrote concerning the question which perplexed me so much, his lordship wrote to me: "Your scruples have produced more fruit than I ever expected from them; an excellent dissertation on general principles of morals and law."

I wrote to Dr. Johnson on the 20th of February, complaining of melancholy, and expressing a strong desire to be with him; informing him that the ten packets came all safe; that Lord Hailes was much obliged to him, and said he had almost wholly removed his scruples against entails.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"5th March, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I have not had your letter half an hour; as you lay so much weight upon my notions, I should think it not just to delay my answer.

"I am very sorry that your melancholy should return, and should be sorry likewise if it could have no relief but from my company. My counsel you may have when you are pleased to require it; but of my company you cannot in the next month have much, for Mr. Thrale will take me to Italy, he says, on the 1st of April.

"Let me warn you very earnestly against scruples. I am glad that you are reconciled to your settlement, and think it a great honour to have shaken Lord Hailes's opinion of entails. Do not, however, hope wholly to reason away your troubles; do not feed them with attention, and they will die imperceptibly away. Fix your thoughts upon your business, fill your intervals with company, and sunshine will again break in upon your mind. If you will come to me, you must come very quickly; and even then I know not but we may scour the country together, for I have a mind to see Oxford and Lichfield before I set out on this long journey. To this I can only add that I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] A letter to him on the interesting subject of the family settlement, which I had read.—BOSWELL.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"12th March, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—Very early in April we leave England, and in the beginning of the next week I shall leave London for a short time; of this I think it necessary to inform you, that you may not be disappointed in any of your enterprises. I had not fully resolved to go into the country before this day.

"Please to make my compliments to Lord Hailes, and mention very particularly to Mrs. Boswell my hope that she is reconciled to, sir, your faithful servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

"6th Feb. 1776.

Gent. Mag. 1797, p. 455. "SIR,—When I received your 'Commentary on the Bible,' I durst not at first flatter myself that I was to keep it, having so little claim to so valuable a present; and when Mrs. Hall[1] informed me of your kindness, was hindered from time to time from returning you those thanks, which I now entreat you to accept.

"I have thanks likewise to return you for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has upon the publick, I know not; but I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right, who, though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair, while Plato staid.—I am, reverend sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

Above thirty years ago, the heirs of Lord Chancellor Clarendon presented the university of Oxford with the continuation of his "History," and such other of his lordship's manuscripts as had not been published, on condition that the profits arising from their publication should be applied to the establishment of a *manège* in the university[2]. The gift was accepted in full convocation. A person[3] being now recommended to Dr. Johnson, as fit to superintend this proposed riding-school, he exerted himself with that zeal for which he was remarkable upon every similar occasion. But, on inquiry into the matter, he found that the scheme was not likely to be soon carried into execution; the profits arising from the Clarendon press being, from some mismanagement, very scanty. This having been explained to him by a respectable dignitary of the church, who had good means of knowing it, he wrote a letter upon the subject, which at once exhibits his extraordinary precision and acuteness, and his warm attachment to his *alma mater*.

"TO THE REV. DR. WETHERELL, MASTER OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"12th March, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—Few things are more unpleasant than the transaction of business with men who are above knowing or caring what they have to do; such as the trustees for Lord Cornbury's institution will, perhaps, appear, when you have read Dr. *****'s letter.

"The last part of the Doctor's letter is of great importance. The complaint[4] which he makes I have heard long ago, and did not know but it was redressed. It is unhappy that a practice so erroneous has not been altered; for altered it must be, or our press will be useless with all its privileges. The booksellers, who, like all other men, have strong prejudices in their own favour, are enough inclined to think the practice of printing and selling books by any but themselves an encroachment on the rights of their fraternity; and have need of stronger inducements to circulate academical publications than those of another; for, of that mutual co-operation by which the general trade is carried on, the university can bear no part. Of those whom he neither loves nor fears, and from whom he expects no reciprocation of good offices, why should any man promote the interest but for profit? I suppose, with all our scholastick ignorance of mankind, we are still too knowing to expect that the booksellers will erect themselves into patrons, and buy and sell under the influence of a disinterested zeal for the promotion of learning.

"To the booksellers, if we look for either honour or profit from our press, not only their common profit, but something more must be allowed; and if books, printed at Oxford, are expected to be rated at a high price, that price must be levied on the publick, and paid by the ultimate purchaser, not by the intermediate agents. What price shall be set upon the book is, to the booksellers, wholly indifferent, provided

[1] [Mr. Wesley's sister.—ED.]

[2] [The Clarendon MSS., and any money which might arise from the sale or publication of them, were given by Catherine, Duchess Dowager of Queensbury, as a beginning of a fund for supporting a manège or academy for riding, and other useful exercises in Oxford, pursuant to, and in confirmation of, the last will of Henry Lord Hyde, bearing date the 10th day of August, 1751.—HALL.]

[3] [A Mr. Carter. See *ante*, 3d of March, 1773.—ED.]

[4] I suppose the complaint was, that the trustees of the Oxford press did not allow the London booksellers a sufficient profit upon vending their publications.—BOSWELL.

that they gain a proportionate profit by negotiating the sale.

"Why books printed at Oxford should be particularly dear, I am, however, unable to find. We pay no rent; we inherit many of our instruments and materials; lodging and victuals are cheaper than at London; and, therefore, workmanship ought, at least, not to be dearer. Our expenses are naturally less than those of booksellers; and in most cases, communities are content with less profit than individuals.

"It is, perhaps, not considered through how many hands a book often passes, before it comes into those of the reader; or what part of the profit each hand must retain, as a motive for transmitting it to the next.

"We will call our primary agent in London, Mr. Cadell, who receives our books from us, gives them room in his warehouse, and issues them on demand; by him they are sold to Mr. Dilly, a wholesale bookseller, who sends them into the country; and the last seller is the country bookseller. Here are three profits to be paid between the printer and the reader, or, in the style of commerce, between the manufacturer and the consumer; and if any of these profits is too penuriously distributed, the process of commerce is interrupted.

"We are now come to the practical question, what is to be done? You will tell me, with reason, that I have said nothing, till I declare how much, according to my opinion, of the ultimate price ought to be distributed through the whole succession of sale.

"The deduction, I am afraid, will appear very great; but let it be considered before it is refused. We must allow, for profit, between thirty and thirty-five per cent. between six and seven shillings in the pound; that is, for every book which costs the last buyer twenty shillings, we must charge Mr. Cadell with something less than fourteen: We must set the copies at fourteen shillings each, and superadd what is called the quarterly book, or for every hundred books so charged we must deliver an hundred and four.

"The profits will then stand thus:

"Mr. Cadell, who runs no hazard, and gives no credit, will be paid for warehouse room and attendance by a shilling profit on each book, and his chance of the quarterly book.

"Mr. Dilly, who buys the book for fifteen shillings, and who will expect the quarterly-book if he takes five and twenty, will send it to his country customer at sixteen and sixpence, by which, at the hazard of loss, and the certainty of long credit, he gains the regular profit of ten per cent. which is expected in the wholesale trade.

"The country bookseller, buying at sixteen and sixpence, and commonly trusting a considerable time, gains but three and sixpence, and if he trusts a year, not much more than two and sixpence; otherwise than as he may, perhaps, take as long credit as he gives.

"With less profit than this, and more you see he cannot have, the country bookseller cannot live; for his receipts are small, and his debts sometimes bad.

"Thus, dear sir, I have been incited by Dr. ******'s letter to give you a detail of the circulation of books, which, perhaps, every man has not had opportunity of knowing; and which those who know it, do not, perhaps, always distinctly consider.—I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON[1]."

Having arrived in London late on Friday, the 15th of March, I hastened next morning to wait on Dr. Johnson, at his house; but found he was removed from Johnson's-court, No. 7, to Bolt-court, No. 8, still keeping to his favourite Fleet-street. My reflection at the time upon this change, as marked in my journal, is as follows: "I felt a foolish regret that he had left a court which bore his name[2]; but it was not foolish to be affected with some tenderness of regard for a place in which I had seen him a great deal, from whence I had often issued a better and a happier man than when I went in, and which had often appeared to my imagination while I trod its pavement, in the solemn darkness of the night, to be sacred to wisdom and piety." Being informed that he was at Mr. Thrale's in the borough, I hastened thither, and found Mrs. Thrale and him at breakfast. I was kindly welcomed. In a moment he was in a full glow of conversation, and I felt myself elevated as if brought into another state of being. Mrs. Thrale and I looked to each other while he talked, and our looks expressed our congenial admiration and affection for him. I shall ever recollect this scene with great pleasure. I exclaimed to her, "I am now, intellectually, *Hermippus redivivus*[3], I am quite restored by him, by transfusion of mind." "There are many," she replied, "who admire and respect Mr Johnson; but you and I *love* him."

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1 I am happy in giving this full and clear statement to the publick, to vindicate, by the authority of the greatest author of his age, that respectable body of men, the booksellers of London, from vulgar reflections, as if their profits were exorbitant, when, in truth, Dr. Johnson has here allowed them more than they usually demand.—BOSWELL.

2 He said, when in Scotland, that he was *Johnson of that Ilk*.—BOSWELL.

3 See vol. i. p. 189.—BOSWELL.

He seemed very happy in the near prospect of going to Italy with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. "But," said he, "before leaving England I am to take a jaunt to Oxford, Birmingham, my native city Lichfield, and my old friend Dr. Taylor's, at Ashbourne, in Derbyshire. I shall go in a few days, and you, Boswell, shall go with me." I was ready to accompany him; being willing even to leave London to have the pleasure of his conversation.

I mentioned with much regret the extravagance of the representative of a great family in Scotland, by which there was danger of its being ruined; and as Johnson respected it for its antiquity, he joined with me in thinking it would be happy if this person should die. Mrs. Thrale seemed shocked at this, as feudal barbarity, and said, "I do not understand this preference of the estate to its owner; of the land to the man who walks upon that land." JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, it is not a preference of the land to its owner; it is the preference of a family to an individual. Here is an establishment in a country, which is of importance for ages, not only to the chief but to his people; an establishment which extends upwards and downwards; that this should be destroyed by one idle fellow is a sad thing."

He said, "Entails are good, because it is good to preserve in a country series of men, to whom the people are accustomed to look up as to their leaders. But I am for leaving a quantity of land in commerce, to excite industry, and keep money in the country; for if no land were to be bought in the country, there would be no encouragement to acquire wealth, because a family could not be founded there; or if it were acquired, it must be carried away to another country where land may be bought. And although the land in every country will remain the same, and be as fertile where there is no money, as where there is, yet all that portion of the happiness of civil life, which is produced by money circulating in a country, would be lost." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, would it be for the advantage of a country that all its lands were sold at once?" JOHNSON. "So far, sir, as money produces good, it would be an advantage; for then that country would have as much money circulating in it as it is worth. But to be sure this would be counterbalanced by disadvantages attending a total change of proprietors."

I expressed my opinion that the power of entailing should be limited thus: "That there should be one-third, or perhaps one half of the land of a country kept free for commerce; that the proportion allowed to be entailed should be parcelled out so that no family could entail above a certain quantity. Let a family, according to the abilities of its representatives, be richer or poorer in different generations, or always rich if its representatives be always wise: but let its absolute permanency be moderate. In this way we should be certain of there being always a number of established roots; and as, in the course of nature, there is in every age an extinction of some families, there would be continual openings for men ambitious of perpetuity, to plant a stock in the entail ground[1]." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, mankind will be better able to regulate the system of entails, when the evil of too much land being locked up by them is felt, than we can do at present when it is not felt."

I mentioned Dr. Adam Smith's book on "The Wealth of Nations," which was just published, and that Sir John Pringle had observed to me, that Dr. Smith, who had never been in trade, could not be expected to write well on that subject any more than a lawyer upon physick. JOHNSON. "He is mistaken, sir; a man who has never been engaged in trade himself may undoubtedly write well upon trade, and there is nothing which requires more to be illustrated by philosophy than trade does. As to mere wealth, that is to say, money, it is clear that one nation or one individual cannot increase its store but by making another poorer: but trade procures what is more valuable, the reciprocation of the peculiar advantages of different countries. A merchant seldom thinks but of his own particular trade. To write a good book upon it, a man must have extensive views. It is not necessary to have practised, to write well upon a subject." I mentioned law as a subject on which no man could write well without practice. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, in England, where so much money is to be got by the practice of the law, most of our writers upon it have been in practice, though Blackstone had not been much in practice when he published his 'Commentaries.' But upon the continent, the great writers on law have not all been in practice: Grotius, indeed, was; but Puffendorf was not; Burlamaqui was not[2]."

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1 The privilege of perpetuating in a family an estate and arms *indefeasibly* from generation to generation is enjoyed by none of his majesty's subjects except in Scotland, where the legal fiction of *fine* and *recovery* is unknown. It is a privilege so proud, that I should think it would be proper to have the exercise of it dependent on the royal prerogative. It seems absurd to permit the power of perpetuating their representation to men, who, having had no eminent merit, have truly no name. The king, as the impartial father of his people, would never refuse to grant the privilege to those who deserved it.—BOSWELL.

2 [Neither Grotius, Puffendorf, nor Burlamaqui.

When we had talked of the great consequence which a man acquired by being employed in his profession, I suggested a doubt of the justice of the general opinion, that it is improper in a lawyer to solicit employment, for why, I urged, should it not be equally allowable to solicit that as the means of consequence, as it is to solicit votes to be elected a member of parliament? Mr. Strahan had told me that a countryman of his and mine[1], who had risen to eminence in the law, had, when first making his way, solicited him to get him employed in city causes. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is wrong to stir up lawsuits; but when once it is certain that a lawsuit is to go on, there is nothing wrong in a lawyer's endeavouring that he shall have the benefit, rather than another." BOSWELL. "You would not solicit employment, sir, if you were a lawyer." JOHNSON. "No, sir; but not because I should think it wrong, but because I should disdain it." This was a good distinction, which will be felt by men of just pride. He proceeded: "However, I would not have a lawyer to be wanting to himself in using fair means. I would have him to inject a little hint now and then, to prevent his being overlooked."

Lord Mountstuart's bill for a Scotch militia, in supporting which his lordship had made an able speech[2] in the house of commons, was now a pretty general topick of conversation. JOHNSON. "As Scotland contributes so little land-tax towards the general support of the nation, it ought not to have a militia paid out of the general fund, unless it should be thought for the general interest that Scotland should be protected from an invasion, which no man can think will happen; for what enemy would invade Scotland, where there is nothing to be got? No, sir; now that the Scotch have not the pay of English soldiers spent among them, as so many troops are sent abroad, they are trying to get money another way, by having a militia paid. If they are afraid, and seriously desire to have an armed force to defend them, they should pay for it. Your scheme is to retain a part of your land-tax, by making us pay and clothe your militia." BOSWELL. "You should not talk of *we* and *you*, sir; there is now an *union*." JOHNSON. "There must be a distinction of interest, while the proportions of land-tax are so unequal. If Yorkshire should say, 'Instead of paying our land-tax, we will keep a greater number of militia,' it would be unreasonable." In this argument my friend was certainly in the wrong. The land-tax is as unequally proportioned between different parts of England, as between England and Scotland; nay, it is considerably unequal in Scotland itself. But the land-tax is but a small part of the numerous branches of publick revenue, all of which Scotland pays precisely as England does. A French invasion made in Scotland would soon penetrate into England.

He thus discoursed upon supposed obligation in settling estates: "Where a man gets the unlimited property of an estate, there is no obligation upon him in *justice* to leave it to one person rather than to another. There is a motive or preference from *kindness*, and this kindness is generally entertained for the nearest relation. If I *owe* a particular man a sum of money, I am obliged to let that man have the next money I get, and cannot in justice let another have it; but if I owe money to no man, I may dispose of what I get as I please There is not a *debitum justitiæ* to a man's next heir; there is only a *debitum caritatis*. It is plain, then, that I have morally a choice according to my liking. If I have a brother in want, he has a claim from affection to my assistance; but if I have also a brother in want, whom I like better, he has a preferable claim. The right of an heir at law is only this, that he is to have the succession to an estate, in case no other person is appointed to it by the owner. His right is merely preferable to that of the king."

We got into a boat to cross over to Blackfriars; and as we moved along the Thames, I talked to him of a little volume, which, altogether unknown to him, was advertised to be published in a few days, under the title of "Johnsoniana, or Bon Mots of Dr. Johnson." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is a mighty impudent thing[3]." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, could you have no redress if you were to prosecute a publisher for bringing out, under your name, what you never said, and ascribing to you dull stupid nonsense, or making you swear profanely, as many igno-

were writers on what can be strictly called practical law; and the great writers on practical law, in all countries, have been practical lawyers.—ED.]

1 [Probably Mr. Wedderburn.—ED.]

2 [Boswell writes to Mr. Wilkes on this subject, 20th April, 1776: "I am delighted to find that my *honoured friend and Mecænas*, my Lord Mountstuart, made an excellent speech on the Scotch militia bill."—*Wilkes's Correspondence*, vol. iv. p. 319. Mr. Boswell's *Mecænas* disappointed his hopes, and hence, perhaps, some of those observations about "*courting the great*" and "*apathy of patrons*" which Mr. Boswell occasionally makes.—ED.]

3 [This was a contemptible jest-book full of indecencies, and with very little of Johnson in it. Mr. Boswell's work is the true *Johnsoniana*, and a judicious and entertaining selection from Boswell, under this title, has been lately published. —ED.]

rant relaters of your *bon mots* do?" JOHNSON. "No, sir, there will always be some truth mixed with the falsehood, and how can it be ascertained how much is true and how much is false? Besides, sir, what damages would a jury give me for having been represented as swearing?" BOSWELL. "I think, sir, you should at least disavow such a publication, because the world and posterity might with much plausible foundation say, 'Here is a volume which was publickly advertised and came out in Dr. Johnson's own name, and, by his silence, was admitted by him to be genuine.'" JOHNSON. "I shall give myself no trouble about the matter."

He was, perhaps, above suffering from such spurious publications; but I could not help thinking, that many men would be much injured in their reputation, by having absurd and vicious sayings imputed to them; and that redress ought in such cases to be given.

He said, "The value of every story depends on its being true. A story is a picture either of an individual or of human nature in general: if it be false, it is a picture of nothing. For instance: suppose a man should tell that Johnson, before setting out for Italy, as he had to cross the Alps, sat down to make himself wings. This many people would believe: but it would be a picture of nothing. ******[1] (naming a worthy friend of ours), used to think a story, a story, till I showed him that truth was essential to it." [On another occasion he said, "A story is a specimen of human manners, and derives its sole value from its truth. When Foote has told me something, I dismiss it from my mind, like a passing shadow; when Reynolds tells me something, I consider myself as possessed of an idea the more."] I observed, that Foote entertained us with stories which were not true; but that, indeed, it was properly not as narratives that Foote's stories pleased us, but as collections of ludicrous images. JOHNSON. "Foote is quite impartial, for he tells lies of every body." [Mr. Cradock[2] relates that a gentleman sitting next to Johnson at a table where Foote was entertaining the company with some exaggerated recitals, whispered his neighbour, "Why, Dr. Johnson, it is impossible that this impudent fellow should know the truth of half what he has told us." "Nay, sir," replied Johnson, hastily, "if we venture to come into company with Foote, we have no right, I think, to look for truth."]

Piozzi, p. 89.

Crad. Mem. p. 98.

The importance of strict and scrupulous veracity cannot be too often inculcated. Johnson was known to be so rigidly attentive to it, that even in his common conversation, the slightest circumstance was mentioned with exact precision. [Indeed one reason why his memory was so particularly exact might be derived from his rigid attention to veracity; being always resolved to relate every fact as it stood, he looked even on the smaller parts of life with minute attention, and remembered such passages as escape cursory and common observers. His veracity was indeed, from the most trivial to the most solemn occasions, strict even to severity; he scorned to embellish a story with fictitious circumstances, which (he used to say) took off from its real value. "A story," said Johnson, "should be a specimen of life and manners; but if the surrounding circumstances are false, as it is no more a representation of reality, it is no longer worthy our attention."] The knowledge of his having such a principle and habit made his friends have a perfect reliance on the truth of every thing that he told, however it might have been doubted if told by many others. As an instance of this, I may mention an odd incident which he related as having happened to him one night in Fleet-street. "A gentlewoman," said he, "begged I would give her my arm to assist her in crossing the street, which I accordingly did; upon which she offered me a shilling, supposing me to be the watchman. I perceived that she was somewhat in liquor." This, if told by most people, would have been thought an invention; when told by Johnson, it was believed by his friends as much as if they had seen what passed[3].

Piozzi, p. 88.

p. 234.

[Mrs. Piozzi relates some very similar instances, which he himself told her. As he was walking along the Strand, a gentleman stepped out of some neighbouring tavern, with his napkin in his hand and no hat, and stopping him as civilly as he could: "I beg your pardon, sir, but you are Dr. Johnson, I believe." "Yes, sir." "We have a wager depending on your reply: pray, sir, is it *irrèparable*, or *irrepàirable* that one should say?" "The *last*, I think, sir," answered Dr. Johnson,

Piozzi, p. 176.

[1] [Although Mr. Langton was a man of strict and accurate veracity, the Editor suspects, from the term *worthy friend*, which Boswell generally appropriates to Mr. Langton, as well as the number of asterisks (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 522, *n.*), that he was here meant; if so, the opinion which Johnson corrected was probably one stated by Mr. Langton in *very early* life, for he knew Johnson when he was only fifteen years of age.—ED.]

[2] [See *post*, 12 April, 1776.—ED.]

[1] [Miss Reynolds says, in her *Recollections*, that she wonders why Mr. Boswell should think this anecdote so surprising; for Johnson's dress was so mean (until his pension) that he might have been easily mistaken for a beggar.—ED.]

"for the adverb [adjective] ought to follow the verb; but you had better consult my Dictionary than me, for that was the result of more thought than you will now give me time for." "No, no," replied the gentleman, gaily, "the *book* I have no certainty at all of; but here is the *author*, to whom I referred: I have won my twenty guineas quite fairly, and am much obliged to you, sir;" so shaking Dr. Johnson kindly by the hand, he went back to finish his dinner or dessert.

He also once told Mrs. Piozzi that a young gentleman called on him one morning, and told him that, having dropped suddenly into an ample fortune, he was willing to qualify himself for genteel society by adding some literature to his other endowments, and wished to be put in an easy way of obtaining it. Johnson recommended the University; "for you read Latin, sir, with *facility*." "I read it a little, to be sure, sir." "But do you read it *with facility*, I say?" "Upon my word, sir, I do not very well know, but I rather believe not." Dr. Johnson now began to recommend other branches of science; and, advising him to study natural history, there arose some talk about animals, and their divisions into oviparous and viviparous: "And the cat here, sir," said the youth who wished for instruction, "pray in which class is she?" The Doctor's patience and desire of doing good began now to give way. "You would do well," said he, "to look for some person to be always about you, sir, who is capable of explaining such matters, and not come to us to know whether the cat lays eggs or not: get a discreet man to keep you company; there are many who would be glad of your table and fifty pounds a year." The young gentleman retired, and in less than a week informed his friends, that he had fixed on a preceptor to whom no objections could be made; but when he named as such one of the most distinguished characters[1] in our age or nation, Dr. Johnson fairly gave himself up to an honest burst of laughter, at seeing this youth at such a surprising distance from common knowledge of the world.

We landed at the Temple-stairs, where we parted.

I found him in the evening in Mrs. Williams's room. We talked of religious orders. He said, "It is as unreasonable for a man to go into a Carthusian convent for fear of being immoral, as for a man to cut off his hands for fear he should steal. There is, indeed, great resolution in the immediate act of dismembering himself; but when that is once done, he has no longer any merit: for though it is out of his power to steal, yet he may all his life be thief in his heart. So when a man has once become a Carthusian, he is obliged to continue so, whether he chooses it or not. Their silence, too, is absurd. We read in the Gospel of the apostles being sent to preach, but not to hold their tongues. All severity that does not tend to increase good, or prevent evil, is idle. I said to the Lady Abbess of a convent, 'Madam, you are here, not for the love of virtue, but the fear of vice.' She said, 'She should remember this as long as she lived.'" I thought it hard to give her this view of her situation when she could not help it; and, indeed, I wondered at the whole of what he now said; because, both in his "Rambler" and "Idler," he treats religious austerities with much solemnity of respect.

Finding him still persevering in his abstinence from wine, I ventured to speak to him of it. JOHNSON. "Sir, I have no objection to a man's drinking wine, if he can do it in moderation. I found myself apt to go to excess in it, and therefore, after having been for some time without it, on account of illness, I thought it better not to return to it. Every man is to judge for himself, according to the effects which he experiences. One of the fathers tells us, he found fasting made him so peevish that he did not practise it."

Though he often enlarged upon the evil of intoxication, he was by no means harsh and unforgiving to those who indulged in occasional excess in wine. One of his friends[2], I will remember, came to sup at a tavern with him and some other gentlemen, and too plainly discovered that he had drunk too much at dinner. When one who loved mischief, thinking to produce a severe censure, asked Johnson, a few days afterwards, "Well, sir, what did your friend say to you, as an apology for being in such a situation?" Johnson answered, "Sir, he said all that a man *should* say: he said he was sorry for it."

I heard him once give a very judicious practical advice upon the subject: "A man who has been drinking wine at all freely should never go into a new company With those who have partaken of wine with him, he may be pretty well in unison; but he will probably be offensive, or appear ridiculous, to other people.'

He allowed very great influence to education. "I do not deny, sir, but there is some original difference in minds; but it is nothing in comparison of what is formed by education. We may instance the science of *numbers*, which all minds are equally capable of attaining[3]: yet we find a prodi-

[1] [Mr. Burke.—*Malone MS.*—ED.]

[2] [Probably Mr. Boswell himself.—ED.]

[3] [This appears to be an ill-chosen illustration

gious difference in the powers of different men, in that respect, after they are grown up, because their minds have been more or less exercised in it: and I think the same cause will explain the difference of excellence in other things, gradations admitting always some difference in the first principles."

This is a difficult subject; but it is best to hope that diligence may do a great deal. We are *sure* of what it can do, in increasing our mechanical force and dexterity.

I again visited him on Monday. He took occasion to enlarge, as he often did, upon the wretchedness of a sea-life. "A ship is worse than a gaol. There is, in a gaol, better air, better company, better conveniency of every kind; and a ship has the additional disadvantage of being in danger. When men come to like a sea-life, they are not fit to live on land." "Then," said I, "it would be cruel in a father to breed his son to the sea." JOHNSON. "It would be cruel in a father who thinks as I do. Men go to sea, before they know the unhappiness of that way of life; and when they have come to know it, they cannot escape from it, because it is then too late to choose another profession; as indeed is generally the case with men, when they have once engaged in any particular way of life."

Piozzi, p. 220. [On another occasion, he said, "The life of a sailor was also a continued scene of danger and exertion; and the manner in which time was spent on shipboard would make all who saw a cabin envy a gaol." The roughness of the language used on board a man of war, where he passed a week[1] on a visit to Captain Knight, disgusted him terribly. He asked an officer what some place was called, and received for answer, that it was where the loplolly-man[2] kept his loplolly; a reply he considered, not unjustly, as disrespectful, gross, and ignorant.]

On Tuesday, 19th March, which was fixed for our proposed jaunt, we met in the morning at the Somerset coffee-house in the Strand, where we were taken up by the Oxford coach. He was accompanied by Mr. Gwyn, the architect; and a gentleman of Merton college, whom he did not know, had the fourth seat. We soon got into conversation; for it was very remarkable of Johnson, that the presence of a stranger had no restraint upon his talk. I observed that Garrick, who was about to quit the stage, would soon have an easier life JOHNSON. "I doubt that, sir." BOSWELL. "Why, sir, he will be Atlas with the burthen off his back." JOHNSON. "But I know not, sir, if he will be so steady without his load. However, he should never play any more, but be entirely the gentleman, and not partly the player: he should no longer subject himself to be hissed by a mob, or to be insolently treated by performers, whom he used to rule with a high hand, and who would gladly retaliate." BOSWELL. "I think he should play once a year for the benefit of decayed actors, as it has been said he means to do." JOHNSON "Alas, sir! he will soon be a decayed actor himself."

Johnson expressed his disapprobation of ornamental architecture, such as magnificent columns supporting a portico, or expensive pilasters supporting merely their own capitals, "because it consumes labour disproportionate to its utility." For the same reason he satirized statuary. "Painting," said he, "consumes labour not disproportionate to its effect; but a fellow will hack half a year at a block of marble to make something in stone that hardly resembles a man. The value of statuary is owing to its difficulty. You would not value the finest head cut upon a carrot." Here he seemed to me to be strangely deficient in taste[3]; for surely statuary is a noble art of

It seems, on the contrary, that there are few powers of mind so unequally given as those connected with *numbers*. The few who have them in any extraordinary degree, like Jedediah Buxton, and like the boys Bidder and Colborne, of our times, seem to have little other intellectual power. See accounts of Buxton in *Gent. Mag.* v. xxi. p. 61, and v. xxiv. p. 251.—ED.]

[1] [It is not likely that he ever spent a *week* on shipboard. As the exact date of his excursion into the West with the Reynoldses (*ante*, v. i. p. 163.) is not given, it cannot be ascertained whether it was then that he visited Captain (afterwards Sir Joseph) Knight who lay, in the Belleisle, in Plymouth Sound, a couple of months of the years 1762 and 1763.—ED.]

[2] [The loplolly-boy is the surgeon's attendant. — ED.]

[3] [Dr. Johnson does not seem to have objected to ornamental architecture or statuary *per se*, but to labour *disproportionate* to its utility or effect. In this view, his criticisms are just. The late style of building introduced into London, of colonnades and porticos, without any regard to aspect, climate, or utility, is so absurd to reason, so offensive to taste, and so adverse to domestic comfort, that it reconciles us to the short-lived materials of which these edifices are composed. It would have been well if we had, according to Johnson's sober advice, thought it necessary that the "*magnificence of porticos*," and the "*expense of pilasters*," should have borne some degree of *proportion* to their *utility*. With regard to "statuary," when it does "preserve the varieties of the human frame," it deserves all that Mr. Boswell says for it: but Johnson's objection was that it more frequently produced abortive failures, "*hardly resembling man.*" — ED.]

imitation, and preserves a wonderful expression of the varieties of the human frame; and although it must be allowed that the circumstances of difficulty enhance the value of a marble head, we should consider, that if it requires a long time in the performance, it has a proportionate value in durability

Gwyn was a fine lively rattling fellow. Dr. Johnson kept him in subjection, but with a kindly authority. The spirit of the artist, however, rose against what he thought a Gothick attack, and he made a brisk defence. "What, sir, you will allow no value to beauty in architecture or in statuary? Why should we allow it then in writing? Why do you take the trouble to give us so many fine allusions, and bright images, and elegant phrases? You might convey all your instruction without these ornaments." Johnson smiled with complacency; but said, "Why, sir, all these ornaments are useful, because they obtain an easier reception for truth; but a building is not at all more convenient for being decorated with superfluous carved work."

Gwyn at last was lucky enough to make one reply to Dr. Johnson, which he allowed to be excellent. Johnson censured him for taking down a church which might have stood for many years, and building a new one at a different place, for no other reason but that there might be a direct road to a new bridge; and his expression was, "You are taking a church out of the way, that the people may go in a straight line to the bridge." "No, sir," said Gwyn, "I am putting the church *in* the way, that the people may not *go out of the way*." JOHNSON (with a hearty loud laugh of approbation). "Speak no more. Rest your colloquial fame upon this."

Upon our arrival at Oxford, Dr. Johnson and I went directly to University college, but were disappointed on finding that one of the fellows, his friend Mr. Scott, who accompanied him from Newcastle to Edinburgh, was gone to the country. We put up at the Angel inn, and passed the evening by ourselves in easy and familiar conversation. Talking of constitutional melancholy, he observed, "A man so afflicted, sir, must divert distressing thoughts, and not combat with them." BOSWELL. "May not he think them down, sir?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. To attempt to *think them down* is madness. He should have a lamp constantly burning in his bedchamber during the night, and if wakefully disturbed, take a book, and read, and compose himself to rest. To have the management of the mind is a great art, and it may be attained in a considerable degree by experience and habitual exercise." BOSWELL. "Should not he provide amusements for himself? Would it not, for instance, be right for him to take a course of chymistry?" JOHNSON. "Let him take a course of chymistry, or a course of rope dancing, or a course of any thing to which he is inclined at the time. Let him contrive to have as many retreats for his mind as he can, as many things to which it can fly from itself. Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy' is a valuable work. It is, perhaps, overloaded with quotation. But there is a great spirit and great power in what Burton says, when he writes from his own mind.'

Next morning [*Wednesday, 20th March*] we visited Dr. Wetherell, master of University college, with whom Dr. Johnson conferred on the most advantageous mode of disposing of the books printed at the Clarendon press, on which subject his letter has been inserted in a former page. I often had occasion to remark, Johnson loved business, loved to have his wisdom actually operate on real life. Dr. Wetherell and I talked of him without reserve in his own presence. WETHERELL. "I would have given him a hundred guineas if he would have written a preface to his 'Political Tracts,' by way of a discourse on the British constitution." BOSWELL. "Dr. Johnson, though in his writings, and upon all occasions, a great friend to the constitution, both in church and state, has never written expressly in support of either. There is really a claim upon him for both. I am sure he could give a volume of no great bulk upon each, which would comprise all the substance, and with his spirit would effectually maintain them. He should erect a fort on the confines of each." I could perceive that he was displeased with this dialogue. He burst out, "Why should I be always writing?" I hoped he was conscious that the debt was just, and meant to discharge it, though he disliked being dunned.

We then went to Pembroke College, and waited on his old friend Dr. Adams, the master of it, whom I found to be a most polite, pleasing, communicative man. Before his advancement to the headship of his college, I had intended to go and visit him at Shrewsbury, where he was rector of St. Chad's, in order to get from him what particulars he could recollect of Johnson's academical life. He now obligingly gave me part of that authentick information, which, with what I afterwards owed to his kindness, will be found incorporated in its proper place in this work.

Dr. Adams had distinguished himself by an able answer to David Hume's "Essay on Miracles." He told me he had once dined in company with Hume in London, that H[illegible] hands with him, and said

'You have treated me much better than I deserve;" and that they exchanged visits. I took the liberty to object to treating an infidel writer with smooth civility. Where there is a controversy concerning a passage in a classick authour, or concerning a question in antiquities, or any other subject in which human happiness is not deeply interested, a man may treat his antagonist with politeness and even respect. But where the controversy is concerning the truth of religion, it is of such vast importance to him who maintains it, to obtain the victory, that the person of an opponent ought not to be spared. If a man firmly believes that religion is an invaluable treasure, he will consider a writer who endeavours to deprive mankind of it as a *robber;* he will look upon him as *odious*, though the infidel might think himself in the right. A robber who reasons as the gang do in the "Beggar's Opera," who call themselves *practical* philosophers, and may have as much sincerity as pernicious *speculative* philosophers, is not the less an object of just indignation. An abandoned profligate may think that it is not wrong to debauch my wife, but shall I, therefore, not detest him? And if I catch him in making an attempt, shall I treat him with politeness? No, I will kick him down stairs, or run him through the body; that is, if I really love my wife, or have a true rational notion of honour. An infidel then should not be treated handsomely by a Christian, merely because he endeavours to rob with ingenuity. I do declare, however, that I am exceedingly unwilling to be provoked to anger, and could I be persuaded that truth would not suffer from a cool moderation in its defenders, I should wish to preserve good humour, at least, in every controversy; nor, indeed, do I see why a man should lose his temper while he does all he can to refute an opponent. I think ridicule may be fairly used against an infidel; for instance, if he be an ugly fellow, and yet absurdly vain of his person, we may contrast his appearance with Cicero's beautiful image of Virtue, could she be seen. Johnson coincided with me and said, "when a man voluntarily engages in an important controversy, he is to do all he can to lessen his antagonist, because authority from personal respect has much weight with most people, and often more than reasoning. If my antagonist writes bad language, though that may not be essential to the question, I will attack him for his bad language." ADAMS. "You would not jostle a chimney-sweeper." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, if it were necessary to jostle him *down*."

Dr. Adams told us, that in some of the colleges at Oxford, the fellows had excluded the students from social intercourse with them in the common room. JOHNSON "They are in the right, sir: there can be no real conversation, no fair exertion of mind amongst them, if the young men are by; for a man who has a character does not choose to stake it in their presence." BOSWELL. "But, sir, may there not be very good conversation without a contest for superiority?" JOHNSON. "No animated conversation[1], sir; for it cannot be but one or other will come off superiour. I do not mean that the victor must have the better of the argument, for he may take the weak side; but his superiority of parts and knowledge will necessarily appear; and he to whom he thus shows himself superiour is lessened in the eyes of the young men. You know it was said, '*Mallem cum Scaligero errare quam cum Clavio recte sapere.*' In the same manner take Bentley's and Jason de Nores' Comments upon Horace[2], you will admire Bentley more when wrong, than Jason when right."

We walked with Dr. Adams into the master's garden, and into the common room. JOHNSON (after a reverie of meditation). "Ay! here I used to play at draughts with Phil. Jones and Fludyer[3]. Jones loved beer, and did not get very forward in the church. Fludyer turned out a scoundrel[4], a whig, and said he was ashamed of having been bred at Oxford. He had a living at Putney; and got under the eye of some retainers to the court at that time, and so became a violent whig; but he had been a scoundrel all along, to be sure." BOSWELL. "Was he a scoundrel, sir, in any other way than that of being a political scoundrel? Did he cheat at draughts?" JOHNSON. "Sir, we never played for *money*."

He then carried me to visit Dr. Bentham, Canon of Christ-Church, and divinity professor, with whose learned and lively conversation we were much pleased. He gave us an invitation to dinner, which Dr. Johnson told me was a high honour. "Sir, it is a great thing to dine with the canons of Christ-Church." We could not accept his invitation, as we were engaged to dine at University College. We had an excellent dinner there, with the masters and fellows, it being St. Cuthbert's day, which is kept by them as a festival, as he was a saint of

[1] [See *post*, *sub* 30th March, 1783, his distinction between *talk* and conversation.—ED.]

[2] [A learned Cypriot, who, when the Turks took Cyprus in 1570, retired into Italy, where he published several Italian and Latin works; among the latter was a "Commentary on Horace's Art of Poetry."—ED.]

[3] [*Fludyer* was the immediate contemporary of Johnson, having entered (scholar) within a month of Johnson's entrance, *fellow* before the end of the year; M. A. April, 1735. Phil. Jones must have been about a year their senior, having become M. A. March, 1734.—HALL.]

[4] [See *post* 27th March, 1776, *n.*—ED.]

Durham, with which this college is much connected.

We drank tea with Dr. Horne, late President of Magdalen College and Bishop of Norwich, of whose abilities in different respects the publick has had eminent proofs, and the esteem annexed to whose character was increased by knowing him personally. He had talked of publishing an edition of Walton's Lives, but had laid aside that design, upon Dr. Johnson's telling him, from mistake, that Lord Hailes intended to do it. I had wished to negotiate between Lord Hailes and him, that one or other should perform so good a work. JOHNSON. "In order to do it well, it will be necessary to collect all the editions of Walton's Lives. By way of adapting the book to the taste of the present age, they have, in a late edition, left out a vision which he relates Dr. Donne had, but it should be restored [1]; and there should be a critical catalogue given of the works of the different persons whose lives were written by Walton, and therefore their works must be carefully read by the editor."

We then went to Trinity College, where he introduced me to Mr. Thomas Warton, with whom we passed a part of the evening. We talked of biography. JOHNSON. "It is rarely well executed. They only who live with a man can write his life with any genuine exactness and discrimination; and few people who have lived with a man know what to remark about him. The chaplain of a late bishop [2], whom I was to assist in writing some memoirs of his lordship, could tell me scarcely any thing [3]."

I said, Mr. Robert Dodsley's life should be written, as he had been so much connected with the wits of his time, and by his literary merit had raised himself from the station of a footman. Mr. Warton said, he had published a little volume under the title of "The Muse in Livery." JOHNSON. "I doubt whether Dodsley's brother would thank a man who should write his life; yet Dodsley himself was not unwilling that his original low condition should be recollected. When Lord Lyttleton's 'Dialogues of the Dead' came out, one of which is between Apicius, an ancient epicure, and Dartineuf [4], a modern epicure, Dodsley said to me, 'I knew Dartineuf well, for I was once his footman.'"

Biography led us to speak of Dr. John Campbell, who had written a considerable part of the "*Biographia Britannica*." Johnson, though he valued him highly, was of opinion that there was not so much in his great work, "A Political Survey of Great Britain," as the world had been taught to expect [5]; and had said to me that he believed Campbell's disappointment on account of the bad success of that work had killed him. He this evening observed of it, "That work was his death." Mr. Warton, not adverting to his meaning, answered, "I believe so, from the great attention he bestowed on it." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, he died of *want* of attention, if he died at all by that book."

We talked of a work [6] much in vogue at that time, written in a very mellifluous style, but which, under pretext of another subject, contained much artful infidelity. I said it was not fair to attack us unexpectedly; he should have warned us of our danger, before we entered his garden of flowery eloquence, by advertising, "Spring-guns and men-traps set here." The authour had been an Oxonian, and was remembered there for having "turned Papist." I observed, that as he had changed several times—from the church of England to the church of Rome—from the church of Rome to infidelity,—I did not despair of yet seeing him a methodist preacher. JOHNSON (laughing). "It is said that his range has been more extensive, and that he has once been [a] Mahometan. However, now that he has published his infidelity, he will prob-

[1] The vision which Johnson speaks of was not in the original publication of Walton's "Life of Dr. Donne, in 1640." It is not found in the three earliest editions; but was first introduced into the fourth, in 1765. I have not been able to discover what modern republication is alluded to in which it was omitted. It has very properly been restored by Dr. Zouch.—JAMES BOSWELL.

[2] [The bishop was Zachary Pearce, and the chaplain, Mr. Darby. See *post, sub* May, 1777. —ED.]

[3] It has been mentioned to me by an accurate English friend, that Dr. Johnson could never have used the phrase *almost nothing*, as not being English; and therefore I have put another in its place. At the same time, I am not quite convinced it is not good English. For the best writers use this phrase, "*little or nothing*," i. e. almost so little as to be nothing.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell's friend seems to have been hypercritical.—ED]

[4] [This gentleman, whose proper name was *Charles Dartiquenave* (pronounced and commonly written Darteneuf), is now only recollected as a celebrated epicure; but he was a man of wit, pleasure, and political importance at the beginning of the last century—the associate of Swift, Pope, Addison, and Steele—a contributor to the Tatler, and a member of the Kit-Cat club, of which collection his portrait is one of the best. He was Paymaster of the Board of Works, and Surveyor of the royal gardens; and died in 1737. It was suspected that he was a natural son of Charles the Second, by a foreign lady.—ED.]

[5] Yet surely it is a very useful work, and of wonderful research and labour for one man to have executed.—BOSWELL.

[6] [Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.—ED.]

ably persist in it[1]." BOSWELL. "I am not quite sure of that, sir."

I mentioned Sir Richard Steele having published his "Christian Hero," with the avowed purpose of obliging himself to lead a religious life; yet that his conduct was by no means strictly suitable." JOHNSON. "Steele, I believe, practised the lighter vices."

Mr. Warton, being engaged, could not sup with us at our inn; we had therefore another evening by ourselves. I asked Johnson whether a man's being forward to make himself known to eminent people[2], and seeing as much of life, and getting as much information as he could in every way, was not yet lessening himself by his forwardness. JOHNSON. "No, sir; a man always makes himself greater as he increases his knowledge."

I censured some ludicrous fantastick dialogues between two coach-horses, and other such stuff, which Baretti had lately published. He joined with me, and said, "Nothing odd will do long. 'Tristram Shandy' did not last." I expressed a desire to be acquainted with a lady who had been much talked of, and universally celebrated for extraordinary address and insinuation[3]. JOHNSON. "Never believe extraordinary characters which you hear of people. Depend upon it, sir, they are exaggerated. You do not see one man shoot a great deal higher than another." I mentioned Mr. Burke. JOHNSON. "Yes, Burke *is* an extraordinary man. His stream of mind is perpetual." It is very pleasing to me to record, that Johnson's high estimation of the talents of this gentleman was uniform from their early acquaintance. Sir Joshua Reynolds informs me, that when Mr. Burke was first elected a member of parliament, and Sir John Hawkins expressed a wonder at his attaining a seat, Johnson said, "Now we who know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first men in the country." And once, when Johnson was ill, and unable to exert himself as much as usual without fatigue, Mr. Burke having been mentioned, he said, "That fellow calls forth all my powers. Were I to see Burke now it would kill me." So much was he accustomed to consider conversation as a contest, and such was his notion of Burke as an opponent.

Next morning, Thursday, 21st March, we set out in a post-chaise to pursue our ramble. It was a delightful day, and we rode through Blenheim park. When I looked at the magnificent bridge built by John, Duke of Marlborough, over a small rivulet, and recollected the epigram made[4] upon it—

"The lofty arch his high ambition shows,
The stream an emblem of his bounty flows;"

and saw that now, by the genius of Brown, a magnificent body of water was collected, I said, "They have *drowned* the epigram." I observed to him, while in the midst of the noble scene around us, "You and I, sir, have, I think, seen together the extremes of what can be seen in Britain—the wild rough island of Mull, and Blenheim park."

We dined at an excellent inn at Chapel house, where he expatiated on the felicity of England in its taverns and inns, and triumphed over the French for not having, in any perfection, the tavern life. "There is no private house (said he), in which people can enjoy themselves so well, as at a capital tavern. Let there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur, ever so much elegance, ever so much desire that every body should be easy; in the nature of things it cannot be: there must always be some degree of care and anxiety. The master of the house is anxious to entertain his guests; the guests are anxious to be agreeable to him; and no man, but a very impudent dog indeed, can as freely command what is in another man's house, as if it were his own. Whereas, at a tavern, there is a general freedom from anxiety. You are sure you are welcome: and the more noise you make, the more trouble you give, the more good things you call for, the welcomer you are. No servants will attend you with the alacrity which

[1] [This sarcasm probably alludes to the tenderness with which Gibbon's malevolence to Christianity afterwards induced him to treat Mahometanism in his history; and we have seen that Johnson gravely warned Miss Knight that one who could be converted to popery might by an easy progress become even a *Mahometan*. Something of this sort he probably had in his mind on this occasion.—ED.]

[2] [This was one of Mr. Boswell's predominant passions—a fortunate one for those whom this work amuses, for to it we owe his having sought the acquaintance of Johnson; as he had, about the same time, obtained that of Wilkes: he was, particularly in early life, fond of running after *notorieties* of all sorts. See his father's opinion of this propensity, *ante*, vol. i. p. 458.—ED.]

[3] [Margaret Caroline Rudd, a woman who lived with one of the brothers Perreau, who were about this time executed (17th Jan. 1776) for a forgery: her fame "for extraordinary address and insinuation" was probably very unfounded; it arose from this: she betrayed her accomplices; and they, in return, charged her with being the real authour of the forgery, and alleged that *they* were *dupes* and *instruments* in her hands, and to support this allegation, they and their friends, who were numerous and respectable, exaggerated to the highest degree Mrs. Rudd's supposed powers of address and fascination.—ED.]

[4] [By Doctor Evans.—ED.]

waiters do, who are incited by the prospect of an immediate reward in proportion as they please. No, sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn[1]." He then repeated, with great emotion, Shenstone's lines:

"Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn[2]."

My illustrious friend, I thought, did not sufficiently admire Shenstone. That ingenious and elegant gentleman's opinion of Johnson appears in one of his letters to Mr. Greaves, dated Feb. 9, 1760. "I have lately been reading one or two volumes of the Rambler; who, excepting against some few hardnesses[3] in his manner, and the want of more examples to enliven, is one of the most nervous, most perspicuous, most concise, most harmonious prose writers I know. A learned diction improves by time."

In the afternoon, as we were driven rapidly along in the post-chaise, he said to me, "Life has not many things better than this[4]."

Piozzi, p. 130. [He loved indeed the very act of travelling, and I cannot tell how far one might have taken him in a carriage before he would have wished for refreshment. He was therefore in some respects an admirable companion on the road, as he piqued himself upon feeling no inconvenience, and on despising no accommodations. On the other hand, however, he expected no one else to feel any, and felt exceedingly inflamed with anger if any one complained of the rain, the sun, or the dust. "How," said he, "do other people bear them?" As for general uneasiness, or complaints of long confinement in a carriage, he considered all lamentations on their account as proofs of an empty head, and a tongue desirous to talk without materials of conversation. "A mill that goes without grist," said he, "is as good a companion as such creatures."]

We stopped at Stratford-upon-Avon, and drank tea and coffee; and it pleased me to be with him upon the classick ground of Shakspeare's native place.

He spoke slightingly of "Dyer's Fleece." "The subject, sir, cannot be made poetical. How can a man write poetically of serges and druggets? Yet you will hear many people talk to you gravely of that *excellent* poem, 'The Fleece.'" Having talked of Grainger's "Sugar-cane," I mentioned to him Mr. Langton's having told me, that this poem, when read in manuscript at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, had made all the assembled wits burst into a laugh, when, after much blank verse pomp, the poet began a new paragraph thus:

"Now, Muse, let 's sing of *rats*."

And what increased the ridicule was, that one of the company, who slyly overlooked the reader, perceived that the word had been originally *mice*, and had been altered to *rats*, as more dignified[5].

[1] Sir John Hawkins has preserved very few *memorabilia* of Johnson. There is, however, to be found in his bulky tome, a very excellent one upon this subject. "In contradiction to those who, having a wife and children, prefer domestick enjoyments to those which a tavern affords, I have heard him assert, *that a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity*. 'As soon (said he) as I enter the door of a tavern, I experience an oblivion of care, and a freedom from solicitude: when I am seated, I find the master courteous, and the servants obsequious to my call; anxious to know and ready to supply my wants: wine there exhilarates my spirits, and prompts me to free conversation and an interchange of discourse with those whom I most love: I dogmatise and am contradicted, and in this conflict of opinion and sentiments I find delight.'"—BOSWELL.

[2] We happened to lie this night at the inn at Henley, where Shenstone wrote these lines; which I give as they are found in the corrected edition of his works, published after his death. In Dodsley's collection the stanza ran thus:

"Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
Whate'er his *various tour has* been,
May sigh to think *how oft* he found
His warmest welcome at an inn."—BOSWELL.

[3] ["He too often makes use of the *abstract* for the *concrete*."—SHENSTONE.]

[4] [See *post*, 29th March.—ED.]

[5] [Such is this little laughable incident, which has been often related. Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore, who was an intimate friend of Dr. Grainger, and has a particular regard for his memory, has communicated to me the following explanation.

"The passage in question was originally not liable to such a perversion: for the authour having occasion in that part of his work to mention the havock made by rats and mice, had introduced the subject in a kind of mock-heroick, and a parody of Homer's Battle of the Frogs and Mice, invoking the muse of the old Grecian bard in an elegant and well-turned manner. In that state I had seen it; but afterwards, unknown to me and other friends, he had been persuaded, contrary to his own better judgment, to alter it, so as to produce the unlucky effect above mentioned."

The above was written by the bishop when he had not the poem itself to recur to; and though the account given was true of it at one period, yet, as Dr. Grainger afterwards altered the passage in question, the remarks in the text do not now apply to the printed poem.

The bishop gives this character of Dr. Grainger: "He was not only a man of genius and learning, but had many excellent virtues; being one of the most generous, friendly, and benevolent men I ever knew."

This passage does not appear in the printed work, Dr. Grainger, or some of his friends, it should seem, having become sensible that introducing even *rats* in a grave poem, might be liable to banter. He, however, could not bring himself to relinquish the idea; for they are thus, in a still more ludicrous manner, periphrastically exhibited in his poem as it now stands:

"Nor with less waste the whisker'd vermin race
A countless clan despoil the lowland cane."

Johnson said, that Dr. Grainger was an agreeable man; a man who would do any good that was in his power. His translation of Tibullus, he thought, was very well done; but "The Sugar-cane, a Poem," did not please him[1]; for, he exclaimed, "What could he make of a sugar-cane? One might as well write the 'Parsley-bed, a Poem;' or 'The Cabbage-garden, a Poem.'" Boswell. "You must then *pickle* your cabbage with the *sal atticum*." Johnson. "You know there is already 'The Hop-garden, a Poem:' and I think, one could say a great deal about cabbage. The poem might begin with the advantages of civilized society over a rude state, exemplified by the Scotch, who had no cabbages till Oliver Cromwell's soldiers introduced them; and one might thus show how arts are propagated by conquest, as they were by the Roman arms." He seemed to be much diverted with the fertility of his own fancy.

I told him, that I heard Dr. Percy was writing the history of the wolf in Great Britian. Johnson. "The wolf, sir; why the wolf? Why does he not write of the bear, which we had formerly? Nay, it is said that we had the beaver. Or why does he not write of the gray rat, the Hanover rat, as it is called because it is said to have come into this country about the time that the family of Hanover came? I should like to see '*The History of the Gray Rat, by Thomas Percy, D. D., chaplain in ordinary to his majesty*" (laughing immoderately). Boswell. "I am afraid a court chaplain could not decently write of the gray rat." Johnson. "Sir, he need not give it the name of the Hanover rat." Thus could he indulge a luxuriant sportive imagination, when talking of a friend whom he loved and esteemed[2].

He mentioned to me the singular history of an ingenious acquaintance. "He had practised physick in various situations with no great emolument. A West India gentleman, whom he delighted by his conversation, gave him a bond for a handsome annuity during his life, on the condition of his accompanying him to the West Indies, and living with him there for two years. He accordingly embarked with the gentleman; but upon the voyage fell in love with a young woman who happened to be one of the passengers, and married the wench. From the imprudence of his disposition he quarrelled with the gentleman, and declared he would have no connexion with him. So he forfeited the annuity. He settled as a physician in one of the Leeward Islands. A man was sent out to him merely to compound his medicines. This fellow set up as a rival to him in his practice of physick, and got so much the better of him in the opinion of the people of the island, that he carried away all the business, upon which he returned to England, and soon after died.

On Friday, 22d March, having set out early from Henley, where we had lain the preceding night, we arrived at Birmingham about nine o'clock, and after breakfast went to call on his old schoolfellow, Mr. Hector. A very stupid maid, who opened the door, told us that "her master was gone out; he was gone to the country, she could not tell when he would return." In short, she gave us a miserable reception; and Johnson observed, "She would have behaved no better to people who wanted him in the way of his profession." He said to her, "My name is Johnson; tell him I called. Will you remember the name?" She answered with rustick simplicity, in the Warwickshire pronunciation, "I don't understand you, sir." "Blockhead (said he), I'll write." I never heard the word *blockhead* applied to a woman before, though I do not see why it should not, when there is evident occasion for it[3]. He, however, made

[1] Dr. Johnson said to me, "Percy, sir, was angry with me for laughing at the Sugar-cane; for he had a mind to make a great thing of Grainger's rats."—Boswell. [Miss Reynolds thus gives this anecdote: "Johnson's reply to Dr. Grainger, who was reading his MS. poem of the Sugar-cane to him, will probably be thought more excusable than [a rudeness to Dr. *Percy* (see *post, sub* 1780, *n.*)] When he came to the line 'Say, shall I sing of rats?' 'No!' cried Dr. Johnson, with great vehemency. *This he related to me himself;* laughing heartily at the conceit of Dr. Grainger's refractory muse. *Where* it happened I do not know; but I am certain, very certain, that it was not, as Mr. Boswell asserts, at Sir Joshua's; for they [Sir Joshua and Dr. G.] were not, I believe, personally known to each other." —*Recollections.* The Editor prefers Mr. Langton's authority to that of the lady, who is clearly in error, when she represents Boswell as saying, that Grainger read his poem at Sir Joshua's. He only says, on the authority of Mr. Langton, that *it* was read there; probably by Dr. Percy.—Ed.]

[2] This was not the first nor the last time of his indulging his sportive imagination at Percy's expense; and it may be doubted whether much reliance can be placed on Boswell's good-natured assertion, that he loved and esteemed him.—Ed.]

[3] My worthy friend Mr. Langton, to whom I

another attempt to make her understand him, and roared loud in her ear, "*Johnson*," and then she catched the sound.

We next called on Mr. Lloyd, one of the people called quakers. He too was not at home, but Mrs. Lloyd was, and received us courteously, and asked us to dinner. Johnson said to me, "After the uncertainty of all human things at Hector's, this invitation came very well." We walked about the town, and he was pleased to see it increasing.

I talked of legitimation by subsequent marriage, which obtained in the Roman law, and still obtains in the law of Scotland. JOHNSON. "I think it a bad thing[1], because the chastity of women being of the utmost importance, as all property depends upon it, they who forfeit it should not have any possibility of being restored to good character; nor should the children, by an illicit connexion, attain the full right of lawful children, by the posteriour consent of the offending parties." His opinion upon this subject deserves consideration. Upon his principle there may, at times, be a hardship, and seemingly a strange one, upon individuals; but the general good of society is better secured. And, after all, it is unreasonable in an individual to repine that he has not the advantage of a state which is made different from his own, by the social institution under which he is born. A woman does not complain that her brother who is younger than her gets their common father's estate. Why then should a natural son complain that a younger brother, by the same parents lawfully begotten, gets it? The operation of law is similar in both cases. Besides, an illegitimate son, who has a younger legitimate brother by the same father and mother, has no stronger claim to the father's estate, than if that legitimate brother had only the same father, from whom alone the estate descends.

Mr. Lloyd joined us in the street; and in a little while we met *friend Hector*, as Mr. Lloyd called him. It gave me pleasure to observe the joy which Johnson and he expressed on seeing each other again. Mr. Lloyd and I left them together, while he obligingly showed me some of the manufactures of this very curious assemblage of artificers. We all met at dinner at Mr. Lloyd's, where we were entertained with great hospitality. Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd had been married the same year with their majesties, and, like them, had been blessed with a numerous family of fine children, their numbers being exactly the same. Johnson said, "Marriage is the best state for a man in general, and every man is a worse man, in proportion as he is unfit for the married state."

I have always loved the simplicity of manners, and the spiritual-mindedness, of the quakers; and talking with Mr. Lloyd, I observed, that the essential part of religion was piety, a devout intercourse with the Divinity; and that many a man was a quaker without knowing it.

As Dr. Johnson had said to me in the morning, while we walked together, that he liked individuals among the quakers, but not the sect; when we were at Mr. Lloyd's, I kept clear of introducing any questions concerning the peculiarities of their faith. But I having asked to look at Baskerville's edition of "Barclay's Apology," Johnson laid hold of it; and the chapter on baptism happening to open, Johnson remarked, "He says there is neither precept nor practice for baptism in the scriptures: that is false." Here he was the aggressor, by no means in a gentle manner; and the good quakers had the advantage of him; for he had read negligently, and had not observed that Barclay speaks of *infant* baptism; which they calmly made him perceive. Mr. Lloyd, however, was in a great mistake; for when insisting that the rite of baptism by water was to cease, when the *spiritual* administration of Christ began, he maintained that John the Baptist said, "*My baptism* shall decrease, but *his* shall increase." Whereas the words are, "*He* must increase, but I *must* decrease[2]."

One of them having objected to the "observance of days, and months, and years," Johnson answered, "The church does not superstitiously observe days, merely as days, but as memorials of important facts. Christmas might be kept as well upon one day of the year as another; but there should be a stated day for commemorating the birth of our Saviour, because there is danger that

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am under innumerable obligations in the course of my Johnsonian History, has furnished me with a droll illustration of this question. An honest carpenter, after giving some anecdote, in his presence, of the ill treatment which he had received from a clergyman's wife, who was a noted termagant, and whom he accused of unjust dealing in some transaction with him, added, "I took care to let her know what I thought of her." And being asked, "What did you say?" answered, "I told her she was a *scoundrel*."—BOSWELL.

[1] [Is it not surprising and disgraceful that in a civilized empire like ours, so important a principle as the state of marriage, which is the foundation of our whole civil constitution, should be to this hour vague, obscure, and contradictory?—One law for England, a different one, or rather none at all, for Ireland—and for Scotland the monstrous doctrine mentioned in the text. It is to be hoped that Mr. Peel, who has done so much towards rationalizing our law on other subjects, will see the necessity of doing something similar on this most important one.—ED.]

[2] John, iii. 30.—BOSWELL.

what may be done on any day will be neglected."

He said to me at another time, "Sir, the holidays observed by our church are of great use in religion." There can be no doubt of this, in a limited sense, I mean if the number of such consecrated portions of time be not too extensive. The excellent Mr. Nelson's "Festivals and Fasts," which has, I understand, the greatest sale of any book ever printed in England, except the Bible, is a most valuable help to devotion: and in addition to it I would recommend two sermons on the same subject, by Mr. Pott, Archdeacon of St. Alban's, equally distinguished for piety and elegance. I am sorry to have it to say, that Scotland is the only Christian country, catholic or protestant, where the great events of our religion are not solemnly commemorated by its ecclesiastical establishment, on days set apart for the purpose.

Mr. Hector was so good as to accompany me to see the great works of Mr. Boulton, at a place which he has called Soho, about two miles from Birmingham, which the very ingenious proprietor showed me himself to the best advantage. I wished Johnson had been with us: for it was a scene which I should have been glad to contemplate by his light. The vastness and the contrivance of some of the machinery would have "matched his mighty mind." I shall never forget Mr. Boulton's expression to me, "I sell here, sir, what all the world desires to have—POWER." He had about seven hundred people at work. I contemplated him as an *iron chieftain*, and he seemed to be a father to his tribe. One of them came to him, complaining grievously of his landlord for having distrained his goods. "Your landlord is in the right, Smith (said Boulton). But I'll tell you what: find you a friend who will lay down one half of your rent, and I'll lay down the other half; and you shall have your goods again."

From Mr. Hector I now learnt many particulars of Dr. Johnson's early life, which, with others that he gave me at different times since, have contributed to the formation of this work.

Dr. Johnson said to me in the morning, "You will see, sir, at Mr. Hector's, his sister, Mrs. Careless, a clergyman's widow. She was the first woman with whom I was in love. It dropped out of my head imperceptibly; but she and I shall always have a kindness for each other." He laughed at the notion that a man can never be really in love but once, and considered it as a mere romantick fancy.

On our return from Mr. Boulton's, Mr. Hector took me to his house, where we found Johnson sitting placidly at tea, with his *first love;* who, though now advanced in years, was a genteel woman, very agreeable and well-bred.

Johnson lamented to Mr. Hector the state of one of their schoolfellows, Mr Charles Congreve, a clergyman, which he thus described: "He obtained, I believe, considerable preferment in Ireland, but now lives in London, quite as a valetudinarian, afraid to go into any house but his own. He takes a short airing in his post-chaise every day. He has an elderly woman, whom he calls cousin, who lives with him, and jogs his elbow, when his glass has stood too long empty, and encourages him in drinking, in which he is very willing to be encouraged; not that he gets drunk, for he is a very pious man, but he is always muddy. He confesses to one bottle of port every day, and he probably drinks more. He is quite unsocial; his conversation is quite monosyllabical; and when, at my last visit, I asked him what o'clock it was? that signal of my departure had so pleasing an effect on him, that he sprung up to look at his watch, like a greyhound bounding at a hare." When Johnson took leave of Mr Hector, he said, "Do n't grow like Congreve; nor let me grow like him, when you are near me."

When he again talked of Mrs. Careless to-night, he seemed to have had his affection revived; for he said, "If I had married her, it might have been as happy for me." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, do you not suppose that there are fifty women in the world, with any one of whom a man may be as happy, as with any one woman in particular?" JOHNSON. "Ay, sir, fifty thousand." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, you are not of opinion with some who imagine that certain men and certain women are made for each other; and that they cannot be happy if they miss their counterparts." JOHNSON. "To be sure not, sir. I believe marriages would in general be as happy, and often more so, if they were all made by the lord chancellor, upon a due consideration of the characters and circumstances, without the parties having any choice in the matter[1]."

I wished to have staid at Birmingham to-night, to have talked more with Mr. Hector; but my friend was impatient to reach his native city; so we drove on that stage in the dark, and were long pensive and silent. When we came within the focus of the Lichfield lamps, "Now," said he, "we are getting out of a state of death[2]." We put

[1] [Yet see *ante*, vol. i. p. 269.—ED.]

[2] [As extraordinary, all these things considered, as Mrs. Mac Sweyne's, of Col, never having been on the main land of Scotland, which Johnson called being *behind hand with life!* It is amusing, and might be instructive (if prejudice

up at the Three Crowns, not one of the great inns, but a good old-fashioned one, which was kept by Mr. Wilkins, and was the very next house to that in which Johnson was born and brought up, and which was still his own property[1]. We had a comfortable supper, and got into high spirits. I felt all my toryism glow in this old capital of Staffordshire. I could have offered incense *genio loci;* and I indulged in libations of that ale, which Boniface, in "The Beaux Stratagem," recommends with such an eloquent jollity.

Next morning he introduced me to Mrs. Lucy Porter, his step-daughter. She was now an old maid, with much simplicity of manner. She had never been in London. Her brother, a captain in the navy, had left her a fortune of ten thousand pounds; about a third of which she had laid out in building a stately house, and making a handsome garden, in an elevated situation in Lichfield. Johnson, when here by himself, used to live at her house. She reverenced him, and he had a parental tenderness for her.

We then visited Mr. Peter Garrick, who had that morning received a letter from his brother David, announcing our coming to Lichfield. He was engaged to dinner, but asked us to tea, and to sleep at his house. Johnson, however, would not quit his old acquaintance Wilkins of the Three Crowns. The family likeness of the Garricks was very striking; and Johnson thought that David's vivacity was not so peculiar to himself as was supposed. "Sir," said he, "I don't know but if Peter had cultivated all the arts of gaiety as much as David has done, he might have been as brisk and lively. Depend upon it, sir, vivacity is much an art[2], and depends greatly on habit." I believe there is a good deal of truth in this, notwithstanding a ludicrous story told me by a lady abroad, of a heavy German baron, who had lived much with the young English at Geneva, and was ambitious to be as lively as they; with which view, he, with assiduous exertion, was jumping over the tables and chairs in his lodgings; and when the people of the house ran in and asked, with surprise, what was the matter, he answered, "*Sh' apprens t'etre fif*"

We dined at our inn, and had with us a Mr. Jackson[3], one of Johnson's schoolfellows, whom he treated with much kindness, though he seemed to be a low man, dull and untaught. He had a coarse gray coat, black waistcoat, greasy leather breeches, and a yellow uncurled wig; and his countenance had the ruddiness which betokens one who is in no haste to "leave his can." He drank only ale. He had tried to be a cutler at Birmingham, but had not succeeded; and now he lived poorly at home, and had some scheme of dressing leather in a better manner than common; to his indistinct account of which, Dr. Johnson listened with patient attention, that he might assist him with his advice. Here was an instance of genuine humanity and real kindness in this great man, who has been most unjustly represented as altogether harsh and destitute of tenderness. A thousand such instances might have been recorded in the course of his long life; though that his temper was warm and hasty, and his manner often rough, cannot be denied.

I saw here, for the first time, *oat ale;* and oat-cakes, not hard as in Scotland, but soft like a Yorkshire cake, were served at breakfast. It was pleasant to me to find, that "*oats*," the "*food of horses*," were so much used as the *food of the people* in Dr. Johnson's own town. He expatiated in praise of Lichfield and its inhabitants, who, he said, were "the most sober, decent people in England, the genteelest in proportion to their wealth, and spoke the purest English." I doubted as to the last article of this eulogy; for they had several provincial sounds; as, *there*, pronounced like *fear*, instead of like *fair; once* pronounced *woonse*, instead of *wunse* or *wonse*. Johnson himself never got entirely free of those provincial accents. Garrick sometimes used to take him off, squeezing a lemon into a punch-bowl, with uncouth gesticulations,

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were susceptible of instruction), to observe, that on this visit to his native town, Johnson found his own near relation as much *behind hand with life* as the poor Hebridean, and found also oats, which he had sneered at as *the food* of *men in Scotland*, to be the food, also, of his own fellow townsmen.—Ed.]

[1] I went through the house where my illustrious friend was born, with a reverence with which it doubtless will long be visited. An engraved view of it, with the adjacent buildings, is in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for February, 1785.—Boswell.

[2] [It appears that quite a contrary conclusion might be drawn from the premises; for the liveliness of the Garrick family was obviously *natural* and *hereditary*, and (except perhaps *in degree*) independent of *art* or *habit*. The family was of French extraction, and preserved the vivacity of their original race.—Ed.]

[3] [This person's name was Henry See *post*, 1st Sept. 1777. The "scheme for dressing leather" renders it probable that he was related to the Thomas Jackson, mentioned *ante*, vol. i. p. 13, by Mr. Boswell, as a *servant*, and by Mrs. Piozzi as a *workman* (in truth, probably, a *partner*) of old Mr. Johnson's, about the time when the failure of some scheme for *dressing leather* or parchment accelerated his bankruptcy -Ed.]

looking round the company, and calling out, "Who 's for *poonsh*[1]?"

Very little business appeared to be going forward in Lichfield. I found, however, two strange manufactures for so inland a place, sail-cloth and streamers for ships; and I observed them making some saddle-cloths, and dressing sheep-skins: but upon the whole, the busy hand of industry seemed to be quite slackened. "Surely, sir," said I, "you are an idle set of people." "Sir," said Johnson, "we are a city of philosophers; we work with our heads, and make the boobies of Birmingham work for us with their hands." There was at this time a company of players performing at Lichfield. The manager, Mr. Stanton, sent his compliments, and begged leave to wait on Dr. Johnson. Johnson received him very courteously, and he drank a glass of wine with us. He was a plain, decent, well-behaved man, and expressed his gratitude to Dr Johnson for having once got him permission from Dr. Taylor at Ashbourne to play there upon moderate terms. Garrick's name was soon introduced. JOHNSON. "Garrick's conversation is gay and grotesque. It is a dish of all sorts, but all good things. There is no solid meat in it: there is a want of sentiment in it. Not but that he has sentiment sometimes, and sentiment too very powerful and very pleasing: but it has not its full proportion in his conversation."

When we were by ourselves he told me, "Forty years ago, sir, I was in love with an actress here, Mrs. Emmet, who acted Flora, in 'Hob in a Well.'" What merit this lady had as an actress, or what was her figure, or her manner, I have not been informed; but, if we may believe Mr. Garrick, his old master's taste in theatrical merit was by no means refined; he was not an *elegans formarum spectator*. Garrick used to tell, that Johnson said of an actor, who played Sir Harry Wildair at Lichfield, "There is a courtly vivacity about the fellow;" when, in fact, according to Garrick's account, "he was the most vulgar ruffian that ever went upon *boards*."

We had promised Mr. Stanton to be at his theatre on Monday. Dr. Johnson jocularly proposed to me to write a prologue for the occasion: "A Prologue, by James Boswell, Esq. from the Hebrides." I was really inclined to take the hint. Methought "Prologue, spoken before Dr. Samuel Johnson, at Lichfield, 1776," would have sounded as well as "Prologue, spoken before the Duke of York at Oxford," in Charles the Second's time. Much might have been said of what Lichfield had done for Shakspeare, by producing Johnson and Garrick. But I found he was averse to it.

We went and viewed the museum of Mr. Richard Green, apothecary here, who told me he was proud of being a relation of Dr. Johnson's. It was, truly, a wonderful collection, both of antiquities and natural curiosities, and ingenious works of art. He had all the articles accurately arranged, with their names upon labels, printed at his own little press; and on the staircase leading to it was a board, with the names of contributors marked in gold letters. A printed catalogue of the collection was to be had at a bookseller's. Johnson expressed his admiration of the activity and diligence and good fortune of Mr. Green, in getting together, in his situation, so great a variety of things; and Mr. Green told me that Johnson once said to him, "Sir, I should as soon have thought of building a man of war, as of collecting such a museum." Mr. Green's obliging alacrity in showing it was very pleasing. His engraved portrait, with which he has favoured me, has a motto truly characteristical of his disposition, "*Nemo sibi vivat.*"

A physician being mentioned who had lost his practice, because his whimsically changing his religion had made people distrustful of him, I maintained that this was unreasonable, as religion is unconnected with medical skill. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not unreasonable; for when people see a man absurd in what they understand, they may conclude the same of him in what they do not understand. If a physician were to take to eating of horse-flesh, nobody would employ him; though one may eat horse-flesh, and be a very skilful physician. If a man were educated in an absurd religion, his continuing to profess it would not hurt him, though his changing to it would[2]."

We drank tea and coffee at Mr. Peter Garrick's, where was Mrs. Aston, one of the maiden sisters of Mrs. Walmsley, wife of Johnson's first friend, and sister also of the lady of whom Johnson used to speak with

[1] Garrick himself, like the Lichfieldians, always said *shupreme, shuperior*.—BURNEY. This is still the vulgar pronunciation of Ireland, where the pronunciation of the English language [by those who have not expatriated] is doubtless that which generally prevailed in England in the time of Queen Elizabeth.—MALONE. ["*Shupreme*" and "*shuperior*" are incorrect; yet every one says "*shure*" and "*shugar*" for "*sure*" and "*sugar*."—ED.]

[2] Fothergill, a quaker, and Schomberg, a jew, had the greatest practice of any two physicians of their time.—BURNEY. [Mr. D'Israeli thinks it possible, that Ralph Schomberg (the second son of Dr. Meyer Schomberg), the person mentioned by Dr. Burney, was the person alluded to in the text. Ralph Schomberg was driven from practice and out of society, for some dishonest tampering with the funds of an hospital, with which he was connected.—ED.]

the warmest admiration, by the name of Molly Aston, who was afterwards married to Captain Brodie of the navy.

On Sunday, March 24, we breakfasted with Mrs. Cobb, a widow lady, who lived in an agreeable sequestered place close by the town, called the Friary, it having been formerly a religious house. She and her niece, Miss Adey, were great admirers of Dr. Johnson; and he behaved to them with a kindness and easy pleasantry, such as we see between old and intimate acquaintance. He accompanied Mrs. Cobb to St. Mary's Church, and I went to the cathedral, where I was very much delighted with the musick, finding it to be peculiarly solemn, and accordant with the words of the service.

We dined at Mr. Peter Garrick's, who was in a very lively humour, and verified Johnson's saying, that if he had cultivated gaiety as much as his brother David, he might have equally excelled in it. He was to-day quite a London narrator, telling us a variety of anecdotes with that earnestness and attempt at mimickry which we usually find in the wits of the metropolis. Dr. Johnson went with me to the cathedral in the afternoon. It was grand and pleasing to contemplate this illustrious writer, now full of fame, worshipping in "the solemn temple" of his native city.

I returned to tea and coffee at Mr. Peter Garrick's, and then found Dr. Johnson at the Reverend Mr. Seward's, canon residentiary, who inhabited the bishop's palace, in which Mr. Walmsley lived, and which had been the scene of many happy hours in Johnson's early life. Mr. Seward had, with ecclesiastical hospitality and politeness, asked me in the morning, merely as a stranger, to dine with him; and in the afternoon, when I was introduced to him, he asked Dr. Johnson and me to spend the evening, and sup with him. He was a genteel, well-bred, dignified clergyman, had travelled with Lord Charles Fitzroy, uncle of the present Duke of Grafton, who died when abroad, and he had lived much in the great world. He was an ingenious and literary man, had published an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, and written verses in Dodsley's collection. His lady was the daughter of Mr. Hunter, Johnson's first schoolmaster. And now, for the first time, I had the pleasure of seeing his celebrated daughter, Miss Anna Seward, to whom I have since been indebted for many civilities, as well as some obliging communications concerning Johnson.

Mr. Seward mentioned to us the observations which he had made upon the strata of earth in volcanoes, from which it appeared, that they were so very different in depth at different periods, that no calculation whatever could be made as to the time required for their formation. This fully refuted an antimosaical remark introduced in to Captain Brydone's entertaining tour[1], I hope heedlessly, from a kind of vanity which is too common in those who have not sufficiently studied the most important of all subjects. Dr. Johnson, indeed, had said before, independent of this observation, "Shall all the accumulated evidence of the history of the world—shall the authority of what is unquestionably the most ancient writing, be overturned by an uncertain remark such as this?"

On Monday, March 25, we breakfasted at Mrs. Lucy Porter's. Johnson had sent an express to Dr. Taylor's, acquainting him of our being at Lichfield, and Taylor had returned an answer that his post-chaise should come for us this day. While we sat at breakfast, Dr. Johnson received a letter by the post, which seemed to agitate him very much. When he had read it, he exclaimed, "One of the most dreadful things that has happened in my time." The phrase *my time*, like the word *age*, is usually understood to refer to an event of a publick or general nature. I imagined something like an assassination of the king—like a gunpowder plot carried into execution—or like another fire of London. When asked, "What is it, sir?" he answered, "Mr. Thrale has lost his only son!" This was, no doubt, a very great affliction to Mr and Mrs. Thrale, which their friends would consider accordingly; but from the manner in which the intelligence of it was communicated by Johnson, it appeared for the moment to be comparatively small. I, however, soon felt a sincere concern, and was curious to observe how Dr. Johnson would be affected. He said, "This is a total extinction to their family, as much as if they were sold into captivity." Upon my mentioning that Mr. Thrale had daughters, who might inherit his wealth: "Daughters," said Johnson, warmly, "he'll no more value his daughters than—" I was going to speak. "Sir," said he, "do n't you know how you yourself think? Sir, he wishes to propagate his name" In short, I saw male succession strong in his mind, even where there was no name, no family of any long standing. I said, it was lucky he was not present when this misfortune happened. JOHNSON. "It is lucky for *me* People in distress never think you fee enough." BOSWELL. "And, sir, they will have the hope of seeing you, which will be a relief in the mean time; and when you get to them, the pain will be so far abated, that they will be capable of being consoled by you, which, in the first violence of it, I believe, would not be the case."

[1] [In Sicily and Malta.—ED.]

JOHNSON. "No, sir; violent pain of mind, like violent pain of body, *must* be severely felt." BOSWELL. "I own, sir, I have not so much feeling for the distress of others as some people have, or pretend to have: but I know this, that I would do all in my power to relieve them." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is affectation to pretend to feel the distress of others as much as they do themselves. It is equally so, as if one should pretend to feel as much pain while a friend's leg is cutting off, as he does. No, sir; you have expressed the rational and just nature of sympathy. I would have gone to the extremity of the earth to have preserved this boy."

He was soon quite calm. The letter was from Mr. Thrale's clerk, and concluded, "I need not say how much they wish to see you in London." He said, "We shall hasten back from Taylor's."

Mrs. Lucy Porter and some other ladies of the place talked a great deal of him when he was out of the room, not only with veneration but affection. It pleased me to find that he was so much *beloved* in his native city.

Mrs. Aston, whom I had seen the preceding night, and her sister, Mrs. Gastrel, a widow lady, had each a house, and garden, and pleasure-ground, prettily situated upon Stowhill, a gentle eminence, adjoining to Lichfield. Johnson walked away to dinner there, leaving me by myself without any apology; I wondered at this want of that facility of manners, from which a man has no difficulty in carrying a friend to a house where he is intimate; I felt it very unpleasant to be thus left in solitude in a country town, where I was an entire stranger, and began to think myself unkindly deserted; but I was soon relieved, and convinced that my friend, instead of being deficient in delicacy, had conducted the matter with perfect propriety, for I received the following note in his handwriting:

"Mrs. Gastrel, at the lower house on Stowhill, desires Mr. Boswell's company to dinner at two."

I accepted of the invitation, and had here another proof how amiable his character was in the opinion of those who knew him best. I was not informed, till afterwards, that Mrs. Gastrel's husband was the clergyman who, while he lived at Stratford-upon-Avon, where he was proprietor of Shakspeare's garden, with Gothic barbarity cut down his mulberry-tree [1], and, as Dr. Johnson told me, did it to vex his neighbours. His lady, I have reason to believe, on the same authority, participated in the guilt of what the enthusiasts of our immortal bard deem almost a species of sacrilege.

After dinner Dr. Johnson wrote [the following] letter to Mrs. Thrale, on the death of her son:

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Lichfield, 25th March, 1776.

"DEAR MADAM,—This letter will not, I hope, reach you many days before me; in a distress which can be so little relieved, nothing remains for a friend but to come and partake it. Letters v. i. p. 307.

"Poor, dear, sweet, little boy! When I read the letter this day to Mrs. Aston, she said, 'Such a death is the next to translation.' Yet, however I may convince myself of this, the tears are in my eyes, and yet I could not love him as you loved him, nor reckon upon him for a future comfort as you and his father reckoned upon him.

"He is gone, and we are going! We could not have enjoyed him long, and shall not long be separated from him. He has probably escaped many such pangs as you are now feeling.

"Nothing remains, but that with humble confidence we resign ourselves to Almighty Goodness, and fall down, without irreverent murmurs, before the Sovereign Distributor of Good and Evil, with hope that though sorrow endureth for a night, yet joy may come in the morning.

"I have known you, madam, too long to think that you want any arguments for submission to the Supreme Will; nor can my consolation have any effect, but that of showing that I wish to comfort you. What can be done you must do for yourself. Remember first, that your child is happy; and then, that he is safe, not only from the ills of this world, but from those more formidable dangers which extend their mischief to eternity. You have brought into the world a rational being; have seen him happy during the little life that has been granted to him; and can have no doubt but that his happiness is now permanent and immutable.

"When you have obtained by prayer such tranquillity as nature will admit, force your attention, as you can, upon your accustomed duties and accustomed entertainments. You can do no more for our dear boy, but you must not therefore think less on those whom your attention may make fitter for the place to which he is gone. I am, dearest, dearest madam, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

I said this loss would be very distressing to Thrale, but she would soon forget it, as she had so many things to think of. JOHNSON. "No, sir, Thrale will forget it first.

[1] See an accurate and animated statement of Mr. Gastrel's barbarity, by Mr. Malone, in a note on "Some Account of the Life of William Shakspeare," prefixed to his admirable edition of that poet's works, vol. i. p. 118.—BOSWELL.

She has many things that she *may* think of. *He* has many things that he *must* think of." This was a very just remark upon the different effects of those light pursuits which occupy a vacant and easy mind, and those serious engagements which arrest attention, and keep us from brooding over grief.

He observed of Lord Bute, "It was said of Augustus, that it would have been better for Rome that he had never been born, or had never died. So it would have been better for this nation if Lord Bute had never been minister, or had never resigned."

In the evening we went to the Town-hall, which was converted into a temporary theatre, and saw "Theodosius," with "The Stratford Jubilee." I was happy to see Dr. Johnson sitting in a conspicuous part of the pit, and receiving affectionate homage from all his acquaintance. We were quite gay and merry. I afterwards mentioned to him that I condemned myself for being so, when poor Mr. and Mrs. Thrale were in such distress. JOHNSON. "You are wrong, sir; twenty years hence Mr. and Mrs. Thrale will not suffer much pain from the death of their son. Now, sir, you are to consider, that distance of place, as well as distance of time, operates upon the human feelings. I would not have you be gay in the presence of the distressed, because it would shock them; but you may be gay at a distance. Pain for the loss of a friend, or of a relation whom we love, is occasioned by the want which we feel. In time the vacuity is filled with something else; or sometimes the vacuity closes up of itself."

Mr. Seward and Mr. Pearson[1], another clergyman here, supped with us at our inn, and after they left us, we sat up late as we used to do in London.

Here I shall record some fragments of my friend's conversation during this jaunt.

"Marriage, sir, is much more necessary to a man than to a woman: for he is much less able to supply himself with domestick comforts. You will recollect my saying to some ladies the other day, that I had often wondered why young women should marry, as they have so much more freedom, and so much more attention paid to them while unmarried, than when married. I indeed did not mention the *strong* reason for their marrying—the *mechanical* reason." BOSWELL. "Why that *is* a strong one. But does not imagination make it much more important than it is in reality? Is it not, to a certain degree, a delusion in us as well as in women?" JOHNSON. "Why yes, sir; but it is a delusion that is always beginning again." BOSWELL. "I do n't know but there is upon the whole more misery than happiness produced by that passion." JOHNSON. "I do n't think so, sir."

"Never speak of a man in his own presence. It is always indelicate, and may be offensive."

"Questioning is not the mode of conversation[2] among gentlemen. It is assuming a superiority, and it is particularly wrong to question a man concerning himself. There may be parts of his former life which he may not wish to be made known to other persons, or even brought to his own recollection."

"A man should be careful never to tell tales of himself to his own disadvantage. People may be amused and laugh at the time, but they will be remembered, and brought out against him upon some subsequent occasion."

"Much may be done if a man puts his whole mind to a particular object. By doing so, Norton[3] has made himself the great lawyer that he is allowed to be."

I mentioned an acquaintance of mine, a sectary, who was a very religious man, who not only attended regularly on publick worship with those of his communion, but made a particular study of the Scriptures, and even wrote a commentary on some parts of them, yet was known to be very licentious in indulging himself with women; maintaining that men are to be saved by faith alone, and that the Christian religion had not prescribed any fixed rule for the intercourse between the sexes. JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no trusting to that crazy piety."

I observed that it was strange how well Scotchmen were known to one another in their own country, though born in very distant counties; for we do not find that the gentlemen of neighbouring counties in England are mutually known to each other.

[1] [This was the gentleman whose lady inherited Miss Porter's property, and has contributed so many of her manuscripts to this edition. It was to him that Miss Porter addressed, in the presence of Dr. Johnson, that two-edged reproof, which Dr. Johnson repeated to Mrs. Piozzi. Mr. Pearson having opposed Miss Porter in some argument, she was offended, and exclaimed, "Mr. Pearson, you are just like Dr. Johnson—you contradict every word one speaks"—*Piozzi*, v. 172. —ED.]

[2] [This very just observation explains why the conversation of princes, and of those who *ape* princes, consists of so large a proportion of *questions*. The *badauds* of all nations used to wonder at Buonaparte's active curiosity and desire of knowledge from the multitude of his questions, while in fact *he was only* "*playing at* KING." —ED.]

[3] Sir Fletcher Norton, afterwards speaker of the house of commons, and in 1782 created Baron Grantly.—MALONE.

Johnson, with his usual acuteness, at once saw and explained the reason of this: "Why, sir, you have Edinburgh where the gentlemen from all your counties meet, and which is not so large but they are all known. There is no such common place of collection in England, except London, where from its great size, and diffusion, many of those who reside in contiguous counties of England may long remain unknown to each other."

On Tuesday, March 26, there came for us an equipage properly suited to a wealthy well-beneficed clergyman: Dr. Taylor's large roomy post-chaise, drawn by four stout plump horses, and driven by two steady jolly postilions, which conveyed us to Ashbourne; where I found my friend's schoolfellow living upon an establishment perfectly corresponding with his substantial creditable equipage: his house, garden, pleasure-ground, table, in short every thing good, and no scantiness appearing. Every man should form such a plan of living as he can execute completely. Let him not draw an outline wider than he can fill up. I have seen many skeletons of show and magnificence which excite at once ridicule and pity. Dr. Taylor had a good estate of his own, and good preferment in the church, being a prebendary of Westminster, and rector of Bosworth. He was a diligent justice of the peace, and presided over the town of Ashbourne, to the inhabitants of which I was told he was very liberal; and as a proof of this it was mentioned to me, he had the preceding winter distributed two hundred pounds among such of them as stood in need of his assistance. He had consequently a considerable political interest in the county of Derby, which he employed to support the Devonshire family; for though the schoolfellow and friend of Johnson, he was a whig. I could not perceive in his character much congeniality of any sort with that of Johnson, who, however, said to me, "Sir, he has a very strong understanding." His size, and figure, and countenance, and manner, were that of a hearty English squire, with the parson super-induced: and I took particular notice of his upper-servant, Mr. Peters, a decent grave man, in purple clothes, and a large white whig, like the butler or *major-domo* of a bishop.

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Taylor met with great cordiality; and Johnson soon gave him the same sad account of their schoolfellow, Congreve, that he had given to Mr. Hector; adding a remark of such moment to the rational conduct of a man in the decline of life, that deserves to be imprinted upon every mind: "There is nothing against which an old man should be so much upon his guard as putting himself to nurse." innumerable have been the melancholy instances of men once distinguished for firmness, resolution, and spirit, who in their latter days have been governed like children, by interested female artifice.

Dr. Taylor commended a physician [1] who was known to him and Dr. Johnson, and said, "I fight many battles for him, as many people in the country dislike him." JOHNSON. "But you should consider, sir, that by every one of your victories he is a loser; for every man of whom you get the better will be very angry, and resolve not to employ him; whereas if people get the better of you in argument about him, they'll think, 'We'll send for Dr. [Butter] nevertheless.'" This was an observation deep and sure in human nature.

Next day we talked of a book [2] in which an eminent judge was arraigned before the bar of the publick, as having pronounced an unjust decision in a great cause. Dr. Johnson maintained that this publication would not give any uneasiness to the judge. "For," said he, "either he acted honestly, or he meant to do injustice. If he acted honestly, his own consciousness will protect him; if he meant to do injustice, he will be glad to see the man who attacks him so much vexed."

Next day, as Dr. Johnson had acquainted Dr. Taylor of the reason for his returning speedily to London, it was resolved that we should set out after dinner. A few of Dr. Taylor's neighbours were his guests that day.

Dr. Johnson talked with approbation of one who had attained to the state of the philosophical wise man, that is, to have no want of any thing. "Then, sir," said I, "the savage is a wise man." "Sir," said he, "I do not mean simply being without, —but not having a want." [3] I maintained, against this proposition, that it was better to have fine clothes, for instance, than not to feel the want of them. JOHNSON. "No, sir; fine clothes are good only as they supply the want of other means of procuring respect. Was Charles the Twelfth, think you, less respected for his coarse blue coat and black stock? And you find the King of Prussia dresses plain, because the dignity of his character is sufficient." I here brought myself into a scrape, for I heedlessly said, "Would not *you*, sir, be the better for velvet embroidery?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you put an end to all argument when you introduce your opponent himself. Have you no better manners? There is *your want*."

[1] [Dr. Butter, who afterwards came to practise in London, and attended Johnson in his last illness. —ED.]

[2] [Andrew Stuart's 'Letters to Lord Mansfield on the Douglas Cause.'—ED.]

[3] [The want seems, on this occasion, to have been common to *both*.—ED.]

I apologised by saying I had mentioned him as an instance of one who wanted as little as any man in the world, and yet, perhaps, might receive some additional lustre from dress.

Having left Ashbourne in the evening, we stopped to change horses at Derby, and availed ourselves of a moment to enjoy the conversation of my countryman, Dr. Butter, then physician there. He was in great indignation because Lord Mountstuart's bill for a Scotch militia had been lost. Dr. Johnson was as violent against it. "I am glad," said he, "that parliament has had the spirit to throw it out. You wanted to take advantage of the timidity of our scoundrels" (meaning, I suppose, the ministry). It may be observed, that he used the epithet *scoundrel*, very commonly, not quite in the sense in which it is generally understood, but as a strong term of disapprobation [1]; as when he abruptly answered Mrs. Thrale, who had asked him how he did, "Ready to become a scoundrel, madam; with a little more spoiling you will, I think, make me a complete rascal [2];" he meant, easy to become a capricious and self-indulgent valetudinarian [3]; a character for which I have heard him express great disgust; [particularly when it connected itself in his mind with intellectual apathy.] ["Nothing more certainly offended Dr. Johnson than the idea of a man's mental faculties decaying by time. 'It is not true; sir,' would he say: 'what a man could once do, he would always do, unless, indeed, by dint of vicious indolence, and compliance with the nephews and nieces who crowd round an old fellow, and help to tuck him in, till he, contented with the exchange of fame for ease, e'en resolves to let them set the pillows at his back, and gives no farther proof of his existence than just to suck the jelly that prolongs it.'"]

Ed.

Piozzi, p. 152.

Johnson had with him upon this jaunt "*Il Palmerino d'Inghilterra*," a romance praised by Cervantes; but did not like it much. He said, he read it for the language, by way of preparation for his Italian expedition. We lay this night at Loughborough.

On Thursday, March 28, we pursued our journey. I mentioned that old Mr. Sheridan complained of the ingratitude of Mr. Wedderburne and General Fraser, who had been much obliged to him when they were young Scotchmen entering upon life in England. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a man is very apt to complain of the ingratitude of those who have risen far above him. A man, when he gets into a higher sphere, into other habits of life, cannot keep up all his former connexions. Then, sir, those who knew him formerly upon a level with themselves may think that they ought still to be treated as on a level, which cannot be: and an acquaintance in a former situation may bring out things which it would be very disagreeable to have mentioned before higher company, though, perhaps, every body knows of them." He placed this subject in a new light to me, and showed, that a man who has risen in the world must not be condemned too harshly, for being distant to former acquaintance, even though he may have been much obliged to them. It is, no doubt, to be wished, that a proper degree of attention should be shown by great men to their early friends. But if either from obtuse insensibility to difference of situation, or presumptuous forwardness, which will not submit even to an exteriour observance of it, the dignity of high place cannot be preserved; when they are admitted into the company of those raised above the state in which they once were, encroachment must be repelled, and the kinder feelings sacrificed. To one of the very fortunate persons whom I have mentioned, namely, Mr Wedderburne, now Lord Loughborough, I must do the justice to relate, that I have been assured by another early acquaintance of his, old Mr. Macklin, who assisted in improving his pronunciation, that he found him very grateful. Macklin, I suppose, had not pressed upon his elevation with so much eagerness as the gentleman who complained of him. Dr. Johnson's remark as to the jealousy entertained of our friends who rise far above us is certainly very just. By this was withered the early friendship between Charles Townshend and Akenside [4]; and many similar instances might be adduced

He said, "It is commonly a weak man who marries for love." We then talked of marrying women of fortune; and I mentioned a common remark, that a man may

[1] ["It is so very difficult," he said, on another occasion, to Mrs. Piozzi, "for a sick man not to be a scoundrel." It may be here observed, that *scoundrel* seems to have been a favourite word of his. In his Dictionary, he defined *knave*, a scoundrel; *loon*, a scoundrel; *lout*, a scoundrel; *poltroon*, a scoundrel; *sneakup*, a scoundrel; *rascal*, a scoundrel; and *scoundrel* itself he defines *a mean rascal; a low petty villain*.—ED.]

[2] *Anecdotes*, p. 176.—BOSWELL.

[3] [See *post*, 16th Sept. 1777.—ED.]

[4] [This is no inappropriate instance. Charles Townshend—the nephew [grandnephew] of the prime minister—the son [grandson] of a peer, who was secretary of state, and leader of the house of lords—was as much above Akenside in their earliest days, as at any subsequent period; nor was Akenside in rank inferior to Dr. Brocklesby, with whom Charles Townshend continued in intimate friendship to the end of his life.—ED.]

be, upon the whole, richer by marrying a woman with a very small portion, because a woman of fortune will be proportionably expensive; whereas a woman who brings none will be very moderate in expenses. JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, this is not true. A woman of fortune being used to the handling of money, spends it judiciously; but a woman who gets the command of money for the first time upon her marriage, has such a gust in spending it, that she throws it away with great profusion."

He praised the ladies of the present age, insisting that they were more faithful to their husbands, and more virtuous in every respect, than in former times, because their understandings were better cultivated. It was an undoubted proof of his good sense and good disposition, that he was never querulous, never prone to inveigh against the present times, as is so common when superficial minds are on the fret. On the contrary, he was willing to speak favourably of his own age; and, indeed maintained its superiority in every respect, except in its reverence for government; the relaxation of which he imputed, as its grand cause, to the shock which our monarchy received at the revolution, though necessary; and, secondly, to the timid concessions made to faction by successive administrations in the reign of his present majesty. I am happy to think, that he lived to see the crown at last recover its just influence

At Leicester we read in the newspaper that Dr. James was dead [1]. I thought that the death of an old schoolfellow, and one with whom he had lived a good deal in London, would have affected my fellow-traveller much: but he only said, "Ah! poor Jamy!" Afterwards, however, when we were in the chaise, he said, with more tenderness, "Since I set out on this jaunt, I have lost an old friend and a young one;—Dr. James, and poor Harry" (meaning Mr. Thrale's son).

Having lain at St. Alban's on Thursday, March 28, we breakfasted the next morning at Barnet. I expressed to him a weakness of mind which I could not help; an uneasy apprehension that my wife and children, who were at a great distance from me, might, perhaps, be ill. "Sir," said he, "consider how foolish you would think it in *them* to be apprehensive that *you* are ill." This sudden turn relieved me for the moment; but I afterwards perceived it to be an ingenious fallacy [2]. I might, to be sure, be satisfied that they had no reason to be apprehensive about me, because I *knew* that I myself was well: but we might have a mutual anxiety, without the charge of folly, because each was, in some degree, uncertain as to the condition of the other.

I enjoyed the luxury of our approach to London, that metropolis which we both loved so much, for the high and varied intellectual pleasure which it furnishes. I experienced immediate happiness while whirled along with such a companion, and said to him, "Sir, you observed one day at General Oglethorpe's, that a man is never happy for the present, but when he is drunk. Will you not add—or when driving rapidly in a post-chaise?" JOHNSON. "No, sir, you are driving rapidly *from* something, or *to* something."

[Yet it was but a week before (21st March) that he had said that "life had few things better than driving rapidly in a post-chaise [3]." This is an instance of the justice of Mrs. Piozzi's observation,] ED.

["That it was unlucky for those who delighted to echo Johnson's sentiments, that he would not endure from them *to-day* what he had *yesterday*, by his own manner of treating the subject, made them fond of repeating [4]."] PIOZZI, p. 201

Talking of melancholy, he said, "Some men, and very thinking men too, have not those vexing thoughts [5]. Sir Joshua Reynolds is the same all the year round. Beauclerk, except when ill and in pain, is the same. But I believe most men have them

[1] [Dr. James died 23d March, 1776.—ED.]

[2] Surely it is no fallacy, but a sound and rational argument. He who is perfectly well, and apprehensive concerning the state of another at a distance from him, *knows* to a certainty that the fears of that person concerning *his* health are imaginary and delusive; and hence has a rational ground for supposing that his own apprehensions, concerning his absent wife or friend, are equally unfounded.—MALONE.

[3] [See also *post*, 19th September, 1777.—ED.]

[4] [See *post*, 1st April, 1781, a similar instance. Menage attributes to the celebrated Duke de Montausier (the *Misanthrope* of Moliere) a like disposition, and gives an amusing instance.—*Menagiana*, vol. iii. p. 91.—ED.]

[5] The phrase "vexing thoughts," is, I think, very expressive. It has been familiar to me from my childhood; for it is to be found in the "Psalms in Metre," used in the churches (I believe I should say *kirks*) of Scotland, Psal. xlii. v. 5.

"Why art thou then cast down, my soul?
What should discourage thee?
And why with *vexing thoughts* art thou
Disquieted in me?"

Some allowance must no doubt be made for early prepossession. But at a maturer period of life, after looking at various metrical versions of the Psalms, I am well satisfied that the version used in Scotland is, upon the whole, the best; and that it is vain to think of having a better. It has in general a simplicity and *unction* of sacred poesy and in many parts its transfusion is admirable.—BOSWELL.

in the degree in which they are capable of having them. If I were in the country, and were distressed by that malady, I would force myself to take a book; and every time I did it I should find it the easier. Melancholy, indeed, should be diverted by every means but drinking."

We stopped at Messieurs Dillys, booksellers in the Poultry; from whence he hurried away, in a hackney coach, to Mr. Thrale's in the Borough. I called at his house in the evening, having promised to acquaint Mrs. Williams of his safe return; when, to my surprise, I found him sitting with her at tea, and, as I thought, not in a very good humour: for, it seems, when he had got to Mr. Thrale's he found the coach was at the door waiting to carry Mrs. and Miss Thrale, and Signor Baretti, their Italian master, to Bath. This was not showing the attention[1] which might have been expected to the "guide, philosopher, and friend;" the *Imlac* who had hastened from the country to console a distressed mother, who, he understood, was very anxious for his return. They had, I found, without ceremony, proceeded on their journey. I was glad to understand from him that it was still resolved that his tour to Italy with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale should take place, of which he had entertained some doubt, on account of the loss which they had suffered; and his doubts afterwards appeared to be well founded. He observed, indeed very justly, that "their loss was an additional reason for their going abroad; and if it had not been fixed that he should have been one of the party, he would force them out; but he would not advise them unless his advice was asked, lest they might suspect that he recommended what he wished on his own account." I was not pleased that his intimacy with Mr. Thrale's family, though it no doubt contributed much to his comfort and enjoyment, was not without some degree of restraint: not, as has been grossly suggested, that it was required of him as a task to talk for entertainment of them and their company; but that he was not quite at his ease; which, however, might partly be owing to his own honest pride—that dignity of mind which is always jealous of appearing too compliant.

On Sunday, March 31, I called on him and showed him as a curiosity which I had discovered, his "Translation of Lobo's Account of Abyssinia," which Sir John Pringle had lent me, it being then little known as one of his works. He said, "Take no notice of it," or Don't talk of it." He seemed to think it beneath him, though done at six-and-twenty. I said to him, "Your style, sir, is much improved since you translated this." He answered, with a sort of triumphant smile, "Sir, I hope it is."

On Wednesday, April 3, in the morning, I found him very busy putting his books in order, and, as they were generally very old ones, clouds of dust were flying around him. He had on a pair of large gloves, such as hedgers use. His present appearance put me in mind of my uncle Dr. Boswell's description of him, "A robust genius, born to grapple with whole libraries."

I gave him an account of a conversation which had passed between me and Captain Cook, the day before, at dinner at Sir John Pringle's; and he was much pleased with the conscientious accuracy of that celebrated circumnavigator, who set me right as to many of the exaggerated accounts given by Dr. Hawkesworth of his Voyages. I told him that while I was with the captain I catched the enthusiasm of curiosity and adventure, and felt a strong inclination to go with him on his next voyage. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a man *does* feel so, till he considers how very little he can learn from such voyages." BOSWELL. "But one is carried away with the general, grand, and indistinct notion of A VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, but a man is to guard himself against taking a thing in general." I said I was certain that a great part of what we are told by the travellers to the South Sea must be conjecture, because they had not enough of the language of those countries to understand so much as they have related. Objects falling under the observation of the senses might be clearly known; but every thing intellectual, every thing abstract—politicks, morals, and religion, must be darkly guessed. Dr. Johnson was of the same opinion. He, upon another occasion, when a friend mentioned to him several extraordinary facts, as communicated to him by the circumnavigators, slily observed, "Sir, I never before knew how much I was respected by these gentlemen; they told me none of these things."

He had been in company with Omai, a native of one of the South Sea Islands, after he had been some time in this country. He was struck with the elegance of his behaviour, and accounted for it thus: "Sir, he had passed his time, while in England, only in the best company; so that all that he had acquired of our manners was genteel. As a proof of this, sir, Lord Mulgrave and

[1] [How so? The journey must have been settled for some days, and, under the melancholy circumstances in which it was arranged, it would surely have been strange if Dr. Johnson's sudden appearance had interrupted it. Baretti, on the other hand, with more appearance of justice, complained that Johnson had not offered to accompany "the distressed mother," instead of himself, who went, he tells us, because no one else would go.—ED.]

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he dined one day at Streatham; they sat with their backs to the light fronting me, so that I could not see distinctly; and there was so little of the savage in Omai, that I was afraid to speak to either, lest I should mistake one for the other[1]."

We agreed to dine to-day at the Mitre tavern, after the rising of the House of Lords, where a branch of the litigation concerning the Douglas estate, in which I was one of the counsel, was to come on. I brought with me Mr. Murray, solicitor-general of Scotland, now one of the judges of the court of session, with the title of Lord Henderland. I mentioned Mr. Solicitor's relation, Lord Charles Hay[2], with whom I knew Dr. Johnson had been acquainted. JOHNSON. "I wrote something for Lord Charles[3], and I thought he had nothing to fear from a court-martial. I suffered a great loss when he died; he was a mighty pleasing man in conversation, and a reading man. The character of a soldier is high. They who stand forth the foremost in danger, for the community, have the respect of mankind. An officer is much more respected than any other man who has little money. In a commercial country, money will always purchase respect. But you find, an officer, who has, properly speaking, no money, is every where well received and treated with attention. The character of a soldier always stands him in stead." BOSWELL. "Yet, sir, I think that common soldiers are worse thought of than other men in the same rank of life; such as labourers." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a common soldier is usually a very gross man, and any quality which procures respect may be overwhelmed by grossness. A man of learning may be so vicious or so ridiculous that you cannot respect him. A common soldier, too, generally eats more than he can pay for. But when a common soldier is civil in his quarters, his red coat procures him a degree of respect." The peculiar respect paid to the military character in France was mentioned. BOSWELL. "I should think that where military men are so numerous, they would be less valuable as not being rare." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, wherever a particular character or profession is high in the estimation of a people, those who are of it will be valued above other men. We value an Englishman high in this country, and yet Englishmen are not rare in it."

Mr. Murray praised the ancient philosophers for the candour and good humour with which those of different sects disputed with each other. JOHNSON. "Sir, they disputed with good humour, because they were not in earnest as to religion. Had the ancients been serious in their belief, we should not have had their gods exhibited in the manner we find them represented in the poets. The people would not have suffered it. They disputed with good humour upon their fanciful theories, because they were not interested in the truth of them: when a man has nothing to lose, he may be in good humour with his opponent. Accordingly you see, in Lucian, the Epicurean, who argues only negatively, keeps his temper; the Stoick, who has something positive to preserve, grows angry[4]. Being angry with one who controverts an opinion which you value, is a necessary consequence of the uneasiness which you feel Every man who attacks my belief, diminishes in some degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneasy; and I am angry with him who makes me uneasy. Those only who believed in revelation have been angry at having their faith called in question; because they only had something upon which they could rest as matter of fact." MURRAY. "It seems to me that we are not angry at a man for controverting an opinion which we believe and value; we rather pity him." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, to be sure, when you wish a man to have that belief which you think is of infinite advantage, you wish well to him; but your primary consideration is your own quiet. If a madman were to come into this room with a stick in his hand, no doubt we should pity the state of his mind; but our primary consideration would be to take care of ourselves. We should knock him

[1] [This might perhaps have been more justly attributed to the defect of his sight (see *ante*, p. 18, *n.*) than to any resemblance between Omai and Lord Mulgrave.—ED.]

[2] [Third son of the third Marquis of Tweedale. He was an officer in the army, and distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy; where he is said to have been the officer who invited the French guards to fire. He was afterwards third in command under Lord Loudon and General Hopson, in an expedition against Canada; but expressing himself with some violence against the tardiness of his superiors, he was, on the 31st July, 1757, put under arrest and sent to England, to be tried by a court-martial, which, however, did not assemble till Feb. 1760; but Lord Charles died on the 1st of May following, before the sentence was promulgated.—ED.]

[3] [The editor, by the kindness of his friend Sir John Beckett, now judge-advocate general, has looked over the original minutes of this court-martial, but finds nothing that can be supposed to have been written by Johnson.—ED.]

[4] He alluded probably to the pleadings for and against *Pleasure* in Lucian's *Dicasteria*, where the Stoick, being defeated by Epicurus in the court below, appeals to Jupiter, but there seems no loss of temper. See *Lucian*, ed. 1615, p. 756. Perhaps the squabble between the disputants at the end of *Jupiter the Tragic* was meant.—ED.]

down first, and pity him afterwards. No, sir, every man will dispute with great good humour upon a subject in which he is not interested. I will dispute very calmly upon the probability of another man's son being hanged; but if a man zealously enforces the probability that my own son will be hanged, I shall certainly not be in a very good humour with him." I added this illustration, "If a man endeavours to convince me that my wife, whom I love very much, and in whom I place great confidence, is a disagreeable woman, and is even unfaithful to me, I shall be very angry, for he is putting me in fear of being unhappy." MURRAY. "But, sir, truth will always bear an examination." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Consider, sir, how should you like, though conscious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime, once a week."

We talked of education at great schools; the advantages and disadvantages of which Johnson displayed in a luminous manner; but his arguments preponderated so much in favour of the benefit which a boy of good parts might receive at one of them [1], that I have reason to believe Mr. Murray was very much influenced by what he had heard to-day in his determination to send his own son to Westminster school. I have acted in the same manner with regard to my own two sons; having placed the eldest at Eton, and the second at Westminster. I cannot say which is best. But in justice to both those noble seminaries, I with high satisfaction declare, that my boys have derived from them a great deal of good, and no evil, and I trust they will, like Horace, be grateful to their father for giving them so valuable an education.

I introduced the topick, which is often ignorantly urged, that the universities of England are too rich [2]; so that learning does not flourish in them as it would do, if those who teach had smaller salaries, and depended on their assiduity for a great part of their income. JOHNSON. "Sir, the very reverse of this is the truth; the English universities are not rich enough. Our fellowships are only sufficient to support a man during his studies to fit him for the world, and accordingly in general they are held no longer than till an opportunity offers of getting away. Now and then, perhaps, there is a fellow who grows old in his college; but this is against his will, unless he be a man very indolent indeed. A hundred a year is reckoned a good fellowship, and that is no more than is necessary to keep a man decently as a scholar. We do not allow our fellows to marry, because we consider academical institutions as preparatory to a settlement in the world. It is only by being employed as a tutor, that a fellow can obtain any thing more than a livelihood. To be sure, a man who has enough without teaching will probably not teach; for we would all be idle if we could. In the same manner, a man who is to get nothing by teaching will not exert himself. Gresham college was intended as a place of instruction for London; able professors were to read lectures gratis; they contrived to have no scholars; whereas, if they had been allowed to receive but sixpence a lecture from each scholar, they would have been emulous to have had many scholars. Every body will agree that it should be the interest of those who teach to have scholars; and this is the case in our universities. That they are too rich is certainly not true; for they have nothing good enough to keep a man of eminent learning with them for his life. In the foreign universities a professorship is a high thing. It is as much almost as a man can make by his learning: and therefore we find the most learned men abroad are in the universities. It is not so with us. Our universities are impoverished of learning, by the penury of their provisions. I wish there were many places of a thousand a year at Oxford, to keep first rate men of learning from quitting the university." Undoubtedly if this were the case, literature

[1] [A peculiar advantage of an education in our public schools was stated in one of his parliamentary speeches by the late Mr. Canning—himself a great authority and example on such a subject. "Foreigners often ask, 'By what means an uninterrupted succession of men, qualified more or less eminently for the performance of united parliamentary and official duties, is secured?' First, I answer (with the prejudices perhaps of Eton and Oxford), that we owe it to our system of public schools and universities. From these institutions is derived (in the language of the prayer of our collegiate churches) '*a due supply of men fitted to serve their country both in church and state.*' It is in her public schools and universities that the youth of England are, by a discipline which shallow judgments have sometimes attempted to undervalue, prepared for the duties of publick life. They are rare and splendid exceptions, to be sure; but in my conscience I believe, that England would not be what she is without her system of public education, and that no other country can become what England is without the advantages of such a system." Such was also Mr. Gibbon's opinion. "I shall always be ready to join in the public opinion, that our public schools, which have produced so many eminent characters, are the best adapted to the genius and constitution of the English people."—*Memoirs. Mis. Works*, vol. i. p. 37.—ED.]

[2] Dr. Adam Smith, who was for some time a professor in the university of Glasgow, has uttered, in his "Wealth of Nations," some reflections upon this subject which are certainly not well founded, and seem to be invidious.—BOSWELL.

would have a still greater dignity and splendour at Oxford, and there would be grander living sources of instruction.

I mentioned Mr. Maclaurin's uneasiness on account of a degree of ridicule carelessly thrown on his deceased father, in Goldsmith's "History of Animated Nature," in which that celebrated mathematician is represented as being subject to fits of yawning so violent as to render him incapable of proceeding in his lecture; a story altogether unfounded, but for the publication of which the law would give no reparation [1]. This led us to agitate the question, whether legal redress could be obtained, even when a man's deceased relation was calumniated in a publication. Mr. Murray maintained there should be reparation, unless the authour could justify himself by proving the fact. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is of so much more consequence that truth should be told, than that individuals should not be made uneasy, that it is much better that the law does not restrain writing freely concerning the characters of the dead. Damages will be given to a man who is calumniated in his lifetime, because he may be hurt in his worldly interests, or at least hurt in his mind: but the law does not regard that uneasiness which a man feels on having his ancestor calumniated. That is too nice. Let him deny what is said, and let the matter have a fair chance by discussion. But if a man could say nothing against a character but what he can prove, history could not be written; for a great deal is known of men of which proof cannot be brought. A minister may be notoriously known to take bribes, and yet you may not be able to prove it." Mr. Murray suggested that the authour should be obliged to show some sort of evidence, though he would not require a strict legal proof: but Johnson firmly and resolutely opposed any restraint whatever, as adverse to a free investigation of the characters of mankind [2].

On Thursday, 4th April, having called on Dr. Johnson, I said, it was a pity that truth was not so firm as to bid defiance to all attacks, so that it might be shot at as much as people chose to attempt, and yet remain unhurt. JOHNSON. "Then, sir, it would not be shot at. Nobody attempts to dis-

[1] Dr. Goldsmith was dead before Mr. Maclaurin discovered the ludicrous errour. But Mr. Nourse, the bookseller, who was the proprietor of the work, upon being applied to by Sir John Pringle, agreed very handsomely to have the leaf on which it was contained cancelled, and reprinted without it, at his own expense.—BOSWELL.

[2] What Dr. Johnson has here said is undoubtedly good sense; yet I am afraid that law, though defined by *Lord Coke* "The perfection of reason," is not altogether *with him*; for it is held in the books, that an attack on the reputation even of a dead man may be punished as a libel because tending to a breach of the peace. There is, however, I believe, no modern decided case to that effect. In the King's Bench, Trinity term, 1790, the question occurred on occasion of an indictment, *the King* v. *Topham*, who, as a *proprietor* of a newspaper entitled "The World," was found guilty of a libel against Earl Cowper, deceased, because certain injurious charges against his lordship were published in that paper. An arrest of judgment having been moved for, the case was afterwards solemnly argued. My friend Mr. Const, whom I delight in having an opportunity to praise, not only for his abilities but his manners—a gentleman whose ancient German blood has been mellowed in England, and who may be truly said to unite the *baron* and the *barrister*, was one of the counsel for Mr. Topham. He displayed much learning and ingenuity upon the general question; which, however, was not decided, as the court granted an arrest chiefly on the informality of the indictment. No man has a higher reverence for the law of England than I have; but with all deference I cannot help thinking, that prosecution by indictment, if a defendant is never to be allowed to justify, must often be very oppressive, unless juries, whom I am more and more confirmed in holding to be judges of law as well as of fact, resolutely interpose. Of late an act of parliament has passed declaratory of their full right to one as well as the other, in matter of libel; and the bill having been brought in by a popular gentleman, many of his party have in most extravagant terms declaimed on the wonderful acquisition to the liberty of the press. For my own part I ever was clearly of opinion that this right was inherent in the very constitution of a jury, and indeed in sense and reason inseparable from their important function. To establish it, therefore, by statute, is, I think, narrowing its foundation, which is the broad and deep basis of common law. Would it not rather weaken the right of primogeniture, or any other old and universally acknowledged right, should the legislature pass an act in favour of it? In my "Letter to the People of Scotland, against diminishing the number of the Lords of session," published in 1785, there is the following passage, which, as a concise, and I hope a fair and rational state of the matter, I presume to quote: "The juries of England are judges of *law* as well as of *fact* in *many civil* and in *all criminal* trials. That my principles of *resistance* may not be misapprehended, any more than my principles of *submission*, I protest that I should be the last man in the world to encourage juries to contradict rashly, wantonly, or perversely, the opinion of the judges. On the contrary, I would have them listen respectfully to the advice they receive from the bench, by which they may often be well directed in forming *their own opinion;* which, 'and not another's,' is the opinion they are to return *upon their oaths*. But where, after due attention to all that the judge has said, they are decidedly of a different opinion from him, they have not only a *power* and a *right*, but they are *bound in conscience* to bring in a verdict accordingly."—BOSWELL.

bute that two and two make four: but with contests concerning moral truth, human passions are generally mixed, and therefore it must be ever liable to assault and misrepresentation."

On Friday, 5th April, being Good Friday, after having attended the morning service at St. Clement's church, I walked home with Johnson. We talked of the Roman Catholick religion. JOHNSON. "In the barbarous ages, sir, priests and people were equally deceived; but afterwards there were gross corruptions introduced by the clergy, such as indulgences to priests to have concubines, and the worship of images, not, indeed, inculcated, but knowingly permitted." He strongly censured the licensed stews at Rome. BOSWELL. "So then, sir, you would allow of no irregular intercourse whatever between the sexes?" JOHNSON. "To be sure I would not, sir. I would punish it much more than it is done, and so restrain it. In all countries there has been fornication, as in all countries there has been theft; but there may be more or less of the one, as well as of the other, in proportion to the force of law. All men will naturally commit fornication, as all men will naturally steal. And, sir, it is very absurd to argue, as has been often done, that prostitutes are necessary to prevent the violent effects of appetite from violating the decent order of life; nay, should be permitted in order to preserve the chastity of our wives and daughters. Depend upon it, sir, severe laws, steadily enforced, would be sufficient against those evils, and would promote marriage."

I stated to him this case:—"Suppose a man has a daughter, who he knows has been seduced, but her misfortune is concealed from the world, should he keep her in his house? Would he not, by doing so, be accessary to imposition? And, perhaps, a worthy, unsuspecting man might come and marry this woman, unless the father inform him of the truth." JOHNSON. "Sir, he is accessary to no imposition. His daughter is in his house; and if a man courts her, he takes his chance. If a friend, or, indeed, if any man, asks his opinion whether he should marry her, he ought to advise him against it, without telling why, because his real opinion is then required. Or, if he has other daughters who know of her frailty, he ought not to keep her in his house. You are to consider the state of life is this; we are to judge of one another's characters as well as we can; and a man is not bound in honesty or honour to tell us the faults of his daughter or of himself. A man who has debauched his friend's daughter is not obliged to say to every body—'Take care of me; don't let me into your house without suspicion. I once debauched a friend's daughter. I may debauch yours.'"

Mr. Thrale called upon him, and appeared to bear the loss of his son with a manly composure. There was no affectation about him; and he talked, as usual, upon indifferent subjects. He seemed to me to hesitate as to the intended Italian tour, on which, I flattered myself, he and Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson were soon to set out; and, therefore, I pressed it as much as I could. I mentioned that Mr. Beauclerk had said, that Baretti, whom they were to carry with them, would keep them so long in the little towns of his own district, that they would not have time to see Rome. I mentioned this to put them on their guard. JOHNSON. "Sir, we do not thank Mr. Beauclerk for supposing that we are to be directed by Baretti. No, sir; Mr Thrale is to go by my advice, to Mr. Jackson[1] (the all-knowing), and get from him a plan for seeing the most that can be seen in the time that we have to travel. We must, to be sure, see Rome, Naples, Florence, and Venice, and as much more as we can." (Speaking with a tone of animation.)

When I expressed an earnest wish for his remarks on Italy, he said, "I do not see that I could make a book upon Italy; yet I should be glad to get two hundred pounds, or five hundred pounds, by such a work." This showed both that a journal of his Tour upon the Continent was not wholly out of his contemplation, and that he uniformly adhered to that strange opinion which his indolent disposition made him utter; "No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money." Numerous instances to refute this will occur to all who are versed in the history of literature.

He gave us one of the many sketches of character which were treasured in his mind, and which he was wont to produce quite unexpectedly in a very entertaining manner "I lately," said he, "received a letter from the East Indies, from a gentleman[2] whom I formerly knew very well; he had returned

[1] A gentleman, who, from his extraordinary stores of knowledge, has been styled *omniscient*. Johnson, I think very properly, altered it to *all knowing*, as it is a *verbum solenne*, appropriated to the Supreme Being.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Richard Jackson, a barrister, member for New Romney, and F. R. S., had obtained, from the universality of his information on all topics, the appellation of "*omniscient Jackson*." He was an intimate friend of Lord Shelburn's, and became a lord of the treasury in his lordship's administration in 1782. Mr. Jackson died in 1786.—ED.]

[2] [This gentleman was probably Mr. Joseph Fowke. See Miscellaneous Letters, General Appendix; and the letters mentioned *post*, p. 57 were probably those referred to in that correspondence —ED.]

from that country with a handsome fortune, as it was reckoned, before means were found to acquire those immense sums which have been brought from thence of late; he was a scholar, and an agreeable man, and lived very prettily in London, till his wife died. After her death, he took to dissipation and gaming, and lost all he had. One evening he lost a thousand pounds to a gentleman whose name I am sorry I have forgotten. Next morning he sent the gentleman five hundred pounds, with an apology that it was all he had in the world. The gentleman sent the money back to him, declaring he would not accept of it; and adding, that if Mr. —— had occasion for five hundred pounds more, he would lend it to him. He resolved to go out again to the East Indies, and make his fortune anew. He got a considerable appointment, and I had some intention of accompanying him. Had I thought then as I do now, I should have gone; but at that time I had objections to quitting England."

It was a very remarkable circumstance about Johnson, whom shallow observers have supposed to have been ignorant of the world, that very few men had seen greater variety of characters; and none could observe them better, as was evident from the strong yet nice portraits which he often drew. I have frequently thought that if he had made out what the French call *une catalogue raisonnée* of all the people who had passed under his observation, it would have afforded a very rich fund of instruction and entertainment. The suddenness with which his accounts of some of them started out in conversation was not less pleasing than surprising. I remember he once observed to me, "It is wonderful, sir, what is to be found in London. The most literary conversation that I ever enjoyed was at the table of Jack Ellis, a money-scrivener, behind the Royal Exchange, with whom I at one period used to dine generally once a week [1]."

Volumes would be required to contain a list of his numerous and various acquaintance, none of whom he ever forgot; and could describe and discriminate them all with precision and vivacity. He associated with persons the most widely different in manners, abilities, rank, and accomplishments. He was at once the companion of the brilliant Colonel Forrester of the guards, who wrote "The Polite Philosopher," and of the awkward and uncouth Robert Levett; of Lord Thurlow, and Mr. Sastres, the Italian master; and has dined one day with the beautiful, gay, and fascinating Lady Craven [2], and the next with good Mrs. Gardiner, the tallow-chandler, on Snow-hill [3].

On my expressing my wonder at his discovering so much of the knowledge peculiar to different professions, he told me, "I learnt what I know of law chiefly from Mr. Ballow [4], a very able man. I learnt some

[1] This Mr. Ellis was, I believe, the last of that profession called *scriveners*, which is one of the London companies, but of which the business is no longer carried on separately, but is transacted by attorneys and others. He was a man of literature and talents. He was the authour of a Hudibrastick version of Maphæus's Canto, in addition to the Æneid; of some poems in Dodsley's collection, and various other small pieces; but, being a very modest man, never put his name to any thing. He showed me a translation which he had made of Ovid's Epistles, very prettily done. There is a good engraved portrait of him by Pether, from a picture by Fry, which hangs in the hall of the Scrivener's company. I visited him October 4, 1790, in his ninety-third year, and found his judgment distinct and clear, and his memory, though faded so as to fail him occasionally, yet, as he assured me, and I indeed perceived, able to serve him very well, after a little recollection. It was agreeable to observe, that he was free from the discontent and fretfulness which too often molest old age. He, in the summer of that year, walked to Rotherhithe, where he dined, and walked home in the evening. He died on the 31st of December, 1791.—Boswell.

[2] Lord Macartney, who, with his other distinguished qualities, is remarkable also for an elegant pleasantry, told me that he met Johnson at Lady Craven's, and that he seemed jealous of any interference. "So," said his lordship, smiling, "*I kept back.*"—Boswell.

[3] [This is much exaggerated (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 235, *n*). His polite acquaintance did not extend much beyond the circle of Mr. Thrale, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the members of the Club. There is no record that the editor recollects, of his having dined at the table of any peer in London except Lord Lucan: he seems scarcely to have known an *English* bishop, except Dr. Shipley and Dr. Porteus, whom every one knew, and except by a few occasional visits at the *bas-bleux* assemblies of Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey, we do not trace him in any thing like *fashionable* society. This seems strange to us; for happily, in our day, a literary man of much less than Johnson's eminence would be courted into the highest and most brilliant ranks of society. Lord Wellesley recollects, with regret, the little notice, compared with his posthumous reputation, which the *fashionable* world seemed to take of Johnson. He was known as a great writer; but his social and conversational powers were not so generally appreciated.—Ed.]

[4] There is an account of him in Sir John Hawkins's Life of Johnson, p. 244. Mr. Thomas Ballow was author of an excellent Treatise of Equity, printed anonymously in 1742, and lately republished with very valuable additions, by John Fonblanque, Esq. Mr. Ballow died suddenly in London, July 26, 1782, aged seventy-five, and is mentioned in the Gentleman's Magazine for that year as "a great Greek scholar, and famous for

too from Chambers: but was not so teachable then. One is not willing to be taught by a young man." When I expressed a wish to know more about Mr. Ballow, Johnson said, "Sir, I have seen him but once these twenty years. The tide of life has driven us different ways." I was sorry at the time to hear this; but whoever quits the creeks of private connexions, and fairly gets into the great ocean of London, will, by imperceptible degrees, unavoidably experience such cessations of acquaintance.

My knowledge of physick," he added, "I learnt from Dr. James, whom I helped in writing the proposals for his Dictionary, and also a little in the Dictionary itself[1]. I also learnt from Dr. Lawrence, but was then grown more stubborn."

A curious incident happened to-day, while Mr. Thrale and I sat with him. Francis announced that a large packet was brought to him from the post-office, said to have come from Lisbon, and it was charged *seven pounds ten shillings*. He would not receive it, supposing it to be some trick, nor did he even look at it. But upon inquiry afterwards he found that it was a real packet for him, from that very friend in the East Indies of whom he had been speaking; and the ship which carried it having come to Portugal, this packet with others had been put into the post-office at Lisbon.

I mentioned a new gaming club, of which Mr. Beauclerk had given me an account, where the members played to a desperate extent[2]. JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, this is mere talk. *Who* is ruined by gaming? You will not find six instances in an age. There is a strange rout made about deep play; whereas you have many more people ruined by adventurous trade, and yet we do not hear such an outcry against it." THRALE. "There may be few absolutely ruined by deep play; but very many are much hurt in their circumstances by it." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, and so are very many by other kinds of expense." I had heard him talk once before in the same manner; and at Oxford, he said "he wished he had learned to play at cards[3]." The truth, however, is, that he loved to display his ingenuity in argument; and therefore would sometimes in conversation maintain opinions which he was sensible were wrong, but in supporting which, his reasoning and wit would be most conspicuous. He would begin thus: "Why, sir, as to the good or evil of card-playing—" "Now," said Garrick, "he is thinking which side he shall take." He appeared to have a pleasure in contradiction, especially when any opinion whatever was delivered with an air of confidence; so that there was hardly any topick, if not one of the great truths of religion and morality, that he might not have been incited to argue, either for or against. Lord Elibank[4] had the highest admiration of his powers. He once observed to me, "Whatever opinion Johnson maintains, I will not say that he convinces me; but he never fails to show me, that he had good reasons for it." I have heard Johnson pay his lordship this high compliment· "I never was in Lord Elibank's company without learning something."

We sat together till it was too late for the afternoon service. Thrale said, he had come with intention to go to church with us. We went at seven to evening prayers at St. Clement's church, after having drunk coffee; an indulgence which I understand Johnson yielded to on this occasion, in compliment to Thrale.

[This day he himself thus records, ED.

"Though for the past week I have had an anxious design of communicating to day, I performed no particular act of devotion, till on Friday I went to church.

"I fasted, though less rigorously than at other times. I, by negligence, poured milk into the tea, and, in the afternoon, drank one dish of coffee with Thrale; yet at night, after a fit of drowsiness, I felt myself very much disordered by emptiness, and called for tea, with peevish and impatient eagerness. My distress was very great."]

On Sunday, April 7, Easter-day, after having been at St. Paul's cathedral, I came to Dr. Johnson, according to my usual custom. It seemed to me, that there was always something particularly mild and placid in his manner upon this holy festival, the commemoration of the most joyful event in the history of our world, the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, who, having triumphed over death and the grave, proclaimed immortality to mankind.

[Yet with what different colours he paints his own state at this moment! ED

"The time is again [come] at which, since the death of my poor dear Tetty, on whom God have mercy, I have annually commemorated the mystery of redemption

his knowledge of the old philosophy."—MALONE.

[1] I have in vain endeavoured to find out what parts Johnson wrote for Dr. James; perhaps medical men may.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Lord Lauderdale informed the Editor that Mr. Fox (a great authority on this as well as on more important subjects) told him, that the deepest play he had ever known was between the year 1772 and the beginning of the American war. Lord Lauderdale instanced 5000*l.* being staked on a single card at faro.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 466 —ED.]

[4] Patrick, Lord Elibank, who died in 1778 (*ante*, v. i. p. 277).—BOSWELL.

and annually purposed to amend my life. My reigning sin, to which perhaps many others are appendant, is waste of time, and general sluggishness, to which I was always inclined, and, in part of my life, have been almost compelled by morbid melancholy and disturbance of mind. Melancholy has had in me its paroxysms and remissions, but I have not improved the intervals, nor sufficiently resisted my natural inclination, or sickly habits."

He adds, however:

p. 145. "In the morning I had at church some radiations of comfort."]

I repeated to him an argument of a lady of my acquaintance, who maintained, that her husband's having been guilty of numberless infidelities, released her from conjugal obligations, because they were reciprocal. JOHNSON. "This is miserable stuff, sir. To the contract of marriage, besides the man and wife, there is a third party—society; and if it be considered as a vow—God: and, therefore, it cannot be dissolved by their consent alone. Laws are not made for particular cases, but for men in general. A woman may be unhappy with her husband; but she cannot be freed from him without the approbation of the civil and ecclesiastical power. A man may be unhappy, because he is not so rich as another; but he is not to seize upon another's property with his own hand." BOSWELL. "But, sir, this lady does not want that the contract should be dissolved; she only argues that she may indulge herself in gallantries with equal freedom as her husband does, provided she takes care not to introduce a spurious issue into his family. You know, sir, what Macrobius has told of Julia[1]." JOHNSON. "This lady of yours, sir, I think, is very fit for a brothel."

Mr. Macbean, author of the "Dictionary of Ancient Geography," came in. He mentioned that he had been forty years absent from Scotland, "Ah, Boswell!" said Johnson smiling, "what would you give to be forty years from Scotland?" I said, "I should not like to be so long absent from the seat of my ancestors." This gentleman, Mrs. Williams, and Mr. Levett, dined with us.

Dr. Johnson made a remark, which both Mr. Macbean and I thought new. It was this: that "the law against usury is for the protection of creditors as well as debtors; for if there were no such check, people would be apt, from the temptation of great interest, to lend to desperate persons, by whom they would lose their money. Accordingly, there are instances of ladies being ruined, by having injudiciously sunk their fortunes for high annuities, which after a few years, ceased to be paid, in consequence of the ruined circumstances of the borrower."

Mrs. Williams was very peevish[2]; and I wondered at Johnson's patience with her now, as I had often done on similar occasions. The truth is, that his humane consideration of the forlorn and indigent state in which this lady was left by her father induced him to treat her with the utmost tenderness, and even to be desirous of procuring her amusement, so as sometimes to incommode many of his friends, by carrying her with him to their houses, where, from her manner of eating, in consequence of her blindness, she could not but offend the delicacy of persons of nice sensations.

After coffee, we went to afternoon service in St. Clement's church. Observing some beggars in the street as we walked along, I said to him, I supposed there was no civilized country in the world where the misery of want in the lowest classes of the people was prevented. JOHNSON. "I believe, sir, there is not; but it is better that some should be unhappy, than that none should be happy, which would be the case in a general state of equality."

When the service was ended, I went home with him, and we sat quietly by ourselves. He recommended Dr. Cheyne's books. I said, I thought Cheyne had been reckoned whimsical. "So he was," said he," in some things; but there is no end of objections. There are few books to which some objection or other may not be made." He added, "I would not have you read anything else of Cheyne, but his book on Health, and his 'English Malady.'"

Upon the question whether a man who had been guilty of vicious actions would do well to force himself into solitude and sadness? JOHNSON. "No, sir, unless it prevent him from being vicious again. With some people, gloomy penitence is only madness turned upside down. A man may be gloomy, till, in order to be relieved from gloom, he has recourse again to criminal indulgencies."

On Wednesday, 10th April, I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's, where were Mr. Murphy and some other company. Before dinner, Dr. Johnson and I passed some time by ourselves. I was sorry to find it was now resolved that the proposed journey to Italy should not take place this year. He said, "I am disappointed, to be sure; but it is

[1] "Nunquam enim nisi navi plenâ tollo vectorem"—Lib. ii. c. vi.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Boswell was not partial to Mrs. Williams. Peevish she probably was; but let it be remembered that she was old, blind, poor, and a dependant. And see *ante*, vol. i. p. 101, a more favourable account from Malone and Miss Hawkins.—ED.]

not a great disappointment." I wondered to see him bear, with a philosophical calmness, what would have made most people peevish and fretful. [But he cordially assented to the reasons which operated on the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale to postpone the journey, as appears from his letter to the lady.]

Ed.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"9th April, 1776.

"Mr. Thrale's alteration of purpose is not weakness of resolution; it is a wise man's compliance with the change of things, and with the new duties which the change produces. Whoever expects me to be angry will be disappointed. I do not even grieve at the effect; I only grieve for the cause."]

Letters, v. i. p. 314.

[His desire, however, to go abroad was very great; and he had a longing wish, too, to leave some Latin verses at the Grand Chartreux.]

Piozzi, p. 130.

I perceived that he had so warmly cherished the hope of enjoying classical scenes, that he could not easily part with the scheme; for he said, "I shall probably contrive to get to Italy some other way[1]. But I won't mention it to Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, as it might vex them." I suggested that going to Italy might have done Mr. and Mrs. Thrale good. JOHNSON. "I rather believe not, sir. While grief is fresh, every attempt to divert only irritates. You must wait till grief be *digested*, and then amusement will dissipate the remains of it."

At dinner, Mr. Murphy entertained us with the history of Mr. Joseph Simpson[2], a schoolfellow of Dr. Johnson's, a barrister at law, of good parts, but who fell into a dissipated course of life, incompatible with that success in his profession which he once had, and would otherwise have deservedly maintained; yet he still preserved a dignity in his deportment. He wrote a tragedy on the story of Leonidas, entitled "The Patriot." He read it to a company of lawyers, who found so many faults that he wrote it over again: so then there were two tragedies on the same subject and with the same title. Dr. Johnson told us, that one of them was still in his possession. This very piece was, after his death, published by some person who had been about him, and, for the sake of a little hasty profit, was fallaciously advertised so as to make it be believed to have been written by Johnson himself.

[1] [He probably may have had some idea of accompanying his friend Mr. Saunders Welsh, who, in fact, went to Italy about the 14th May of this year. See *post*, Feb. 1778.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 150, his letter to this gentleman.—ED.]

I said, I disliked the custom which some people had of bringing their children into company, because it in a manner forced us to pay foolish compliments to please their parents. JOHNSON. "You are right, sir[3]. We may be excused for not caring much about other people's children, for there are many who care very little about their own children. It may be observed, that men who, from being engaged in business, or from their course of life in whatever way, seldom see their children, do not care much about them. I myself should not have had much fondness for a child of my own." MRS. THRALE[4]. "Nay, sir, how can you talk so?" JOHNSON. "At least, I never wished to have a child." [On another occasion, when Mrs. Thrale was relating to him that Dr. Collier (of the commons) had observed, that the love one bore to children was from the anticipation one's mind made while one contemplated them: "We hope," says he, "that they will some time make wise men, or amiable women; and we suffer them to take up our affection beforehand. One cannot love *lumps of flesh*, and little infants are nothing more." "On the contrary," said Johnson, "one can scarcely help wishing, while one fondles a baby, that it may never live to become a man; for it is so probable that when he becomes a man, he should be sure to end in a scoundrel." Girls were less displeasing to him; "for as their temptations were fewer," he said, "their virtue in this life, and happiness in the next, were less improbable; and he loved," he said, "to see a knot of little misses dearly."]

Piozzi, p. 211.

Mr. Murphy mentioned Dr. Johnson's having a design to publish an edition of Cowley. Johnson said, he did not know but he should; and he expressed his disapprobation of Dr. Hurd, for having published a mutilated edition under the title of "Select Works of Abraham Cowley." Mr. Murphy thought it a bad precedent; observing, that any authour might be used in the same manner: and that it was pleasing to see the variety of an authour's compositions at different periods.

We talked of Flatman's Poems; and

[3] [Yet he was always kind to children, even when he blamed the parents for obtruding them. Miss Hawkins tells us that "Johnson was kind, *in his way*, to children: my father seldom observed me with him without recollecting the lion dandling the kid."—*Mem.* 1—23. See also *post*, *circa* 9th April, 1783.—ED.]

[4] [It seems not easy to account for Mrs Thrale's presence in London on the 10th April. She appears by the correspondence with Johnson to have been at Bath, to which place Johnson addressed a letter to her on the 9th See *ante*, p. 59 —ED.]

Mrs Thrale observed, that Pope had partly borrowed from him "The Dying Christian to his Soul." Johnson repeated Rochester's verses upon Flatman, which I think by much too severe:

"Nor that slow drudge in swift Pindarick strains,
Flatman, who Cowley imitates with pains,
And rides a jaded muse, whipt with loose reins."

I like to recollect all the passages that I heard Johnson repeat: it stamps a value on them.

He told us that the book entitled "The Lives of the Poets," by Mr. Cibber, was entirely compiled by Mr. Shiels[1], a Scotchman, one of his amanuenses. "The book sellers," said he, "gave Theophilus Cibber, who was then in prison, ten guineas, to allow Mr. Cibber to be put upon the title-page, as the authour; by this, a double imposition was intended; in the first place that it was the work of a Cibber at all; and, in the second place, that it was the work of old Cibber."

Mr. Murphy said, that "The Memoirs of Gray's Life set him much higher in his estimation than his poems did: for you there saw a man constantly at work in literature." Johnson acquiesced in this; but depreciated the book, I thought, very unreasonably. For he said, "I forced myself to read it, only because it was a common topic of conversation. I found it mighty dull; and, as to the style, it is fit for the second table." Why he thought so I was at a loss to conceive. He now gave it as his opinion, that "Akenside was a superiour poet both to Gray and Mason."

Talking of the Reviews, Johnson said, "I think them very impartial: I do not know an instance of partiality." He mentioned what had passed upon the subject of the Monthly and Critical Reviews, in the conversation with which his Majesty had honoured him. He expatiated a little more on them this evening. "The Monthly Reviewers," said he, "are not Deists; but they are Christians with as little Christianity as may be; and are for pulling down all establishments. The Critical Reviewers are for supporting the constitution both in church and state. The Critical Reviewers, I believe, often review without reading the books through; but lay hold of a topick, and write chiefly from their own minds. The Monthly Reviewers are duller men, and are glad to read the books through."

He talked of Lord Lyttelton's extreme anxiety as an authour; observing, that "he was thirty years in preparing his history, and that he employed a man to point it for him; as if (laughing) another man could point his sense better than himself[2]." Mr. Murphy said, he understood his history was kept back several years for fear of Smollett. JOHNSON. "This seems strange to Murphy and me, who never felt that anxiety, but sent what he wrote to the press, and

[1] [Here followed, in the former editions, a note containing a long extract from the Monthly Review for 1792, controverting the above assertion, which, on account of its length, the Editor has thrown into the Appendix; but he must observe, with more immediate reference to the statement in the text, that notwithstanding the weight which must be given to Dr. Johnson's *repeated assertions* on a subject in which he alleged that he had indisputable evidence in his own possession, yet there are some circumstances which seem at variance with his statements. It is true that the title-page of the first volume says, "*compiled* by Mr. Cibber," but all the other volumes have "compiled by Mr. Cibber and *other hands;*" so that Johnson was certainly mistaken in representing that Cibber was held out as the *sole authour*. In the third vol., p. 156, the life of Betterton, the actor, is announced as "written by R. S." no doubt *Robert Shiels*, and to it is appended the following note, "As *Mr. Theophilus Cibber* is publishing (in another work) the 'Lives and Character of eminent Actors,' he leaves to *other gentlemen concerned in this work* the account of some *players*, who could not be omitted herein as *poets*." A similar notice accompanies the Life of Booth, v. iv. p. 178; and again, in a note on the "Life of Thomson," vol. v. p. 211, *Theophilus Cibber, in his own name*, states, that he read the tragedy of Agamemnon to the theatrical synod with so much applause, that he was selected to play the part of Melisander. These circumstances prove that "a *Cibber*" had some share in the work,—that there was no intention to conceal that it was *Theophilus*,—and that *Robert Shiels and others* were *avowed* assistants. Mr. Boswell, in a former passage, (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 75.) intimated that "some *choice passages* of these lives were written by Johnson himself." That opinion the Editor thought that Johnson's own assertion sufficiently negatived; but he must admit, on reconsideration, that there is some colour for Mr. Boswell's suspicion; for it appears that Johnson was at one time employed to contribute to that work the lives of, at least, Shakspeare and Dryden (see *ante*, v. i. p. 222, and *post*, 15th May, 1776), and though he certainly did not write those lives, yet several passages throughout the work are much in his style. That, however, might arise from the imitation of Shiels; but what is most important is, that the *plan* in which these lives are written is substantially the same as that which Johnson adopted in his own beautiful work.—ED.]

[2] [It may be doubted whether Johnson's dislike of Lord Lyttelton did not here lead him into an error. Persons not so habituated with the details of printing as he was may have been less expert at the use of these conventional signs. Lord Byron wrote to Mr. Murray: "Do you know any one who can *stop*?—I mean *point*, *commas*, and so forth, for I am, I fear, a sad hand at your punctuation."—*Moore's Life of Byron*, vol. i. p. 417.—ED.]

let it take its chance.' MRS. THRALE. 'The time has been, sir, when you felt it." JOHNSON. "Why really, madam, I do not recollect a time when that was the case."

Talking of "The Spectator," he said, "It is wonderful that there is such a proportion of bad papers, in the half of the work which was not written by Addison; for there was all the world to write that half, yet not a half of that half is good. One of the finest pieces in the English language is the paper on Novelty[1], yet we do not hear it talked of. It was written by Grove, a dissenting *teacher*." He would not, I perceived, call him a *clergyman*, though he was candid enough to allow very great merit to his composition. Mr. Murphy said, he remembered when there were several people alive in London, who enjoyed a considerable reputation merely from having written a paper in "The Spectator." He mentioned particularly Mr. Ince, who used to frequent Tom's coffee-house. "But," said Johnson, "you must consider how highly Steele speaks of Mr. Ince[2]." He would not allow that the paper on carrying a boy to travel, signed Philip Homebred, which was reported to be written by the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, had merit. He said, "it was quite vulgar, and had nothing luminous."

Johnson mentioned Dr. Barry's[3] System of Physick. "He was a man," said he, "who had acquired a high reputation in Dublin, came over to England, and brought his reputation with him, but had not great success. His notion was, that pulsation occasions death by attrition; and that, therefore, the way to preserve life is to retard pulsation. But we know that pulsation is strongest in infants, and that we increase in growth while it operates in its regular course; so it cannot be the cause of destruction." Soon after this, he said something very flattering to Mrs. Thrale, which I do not recollect; but it concluded with wishing her long life. "Sir," said I, "if Dr. Barry's system be true, you have now shortened Mrs. Thrale's life, perhaps some minutes, by accelerating her pulsation."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"11th April, 1776.

"DEAREST MADAM,—To have acted, with regard to you, in a manner either unfriendly or disrespectful, would give me great pain; and, I hope, will be always very contrary to my intention. That I staid away was merely accidental. I have seldom dined from home; and I did not think my opinion necessary to your information in any proprieties of behaviour. Reyn. MSS.

"The poor parents of the child are much grieved, and much dejected. The journey to Italy is put off, but they go to Bath on Monday. A visit from you will be well taken, and I think your intimacy is such that you may very properly pay it in a morning. I am sure that it will be thought seasonable and kind, and I wish you not to omit it. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

On Thursday, April 11, I dined with him at General Paoli's, in whose house I now resided, and where I had ever afterwards the honour of being entertained with the kindest attention as his constant guest, while I was in London, till I had a house of my own there. I mentioned my having that morning introduced to Mr. Garrick, Count Neni, a Flemish nobleman of great rank and fortune, to whom Garrick talked of Abel Drugger as *a small part;* and related, with pleasant vanity, that a Frenchman, who had seen him in one of his low characters, exclaimed, "*Comment! je ne le crois pas. Ce n'est pas Monsieur Garrick, ce grand homme!*" Garrick added, with an appearance of grave recollection, "If I were to begin life again, I think I should not play those low characters." Upon which I observed, "Sir, you would be in the wrong, for your great excellence is your variety of playing, your representing so well, characters so very different." JOHNSON. "Garrick, sir, was not in earnest in what he said: for, to be sure, his peculiar excellence is his variety; and, perhaps, there is not any one character which has not been as well acted by somebody else, as he could do it." BOSWELL. "Why then, sir, did he talk so?" JOHNSON. "Why sir, to make you answer as you did." BOSWELL. "I don't know, sir; he seemed to dip deep into his mind for reflection." JOHNSON. "He had not far to dip, sir; he had said the same thing, probably, twenty times before."

Of a nobleman raised at a very early period to high office, he said, "His parts, sir, are pretty well for a lord; but would not be distinguished in a man who had nothing else but his parts[4]."

A journey to Italy was still in his thoughts. He said, "A man who has not been in Italy

[1] [Spectator, No. 626.—ED.]

[2] [In the 555th Number of the Spectator.—ED.]

[3] Sir Edward Barry, Baronet. [He published a curious work on the Wines of the Ancients.—ED.]

[4] [Obvious as this allusion must have been at the time, neither the editor, nor any of the numerous persons who have favoured him with assistance and information, can satisfactorily designate the nobleman here meant.—ED.]

is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what it is expected a man should see. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. On those shores were the four great empires of the world; the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean." The General observed, that "THE MEDITERRANEAN would be a noble subject for a poem."

We talked of translation. I said, I could not define it, nor could I think of a similitude to illustrate it; but that it appeared to me the translation of poetry could be only imitation. JOHNSON. "You may translate books of science exactly. You may also translate history, in so far as it is not embellished with oratory, which is poetical. Poetry, indeed, cannot be translated; and, therefore, it is the poets that preserve languages; for we would not be at the trouble to learn a language, if we could have all that is written in it just as well in a translation But as the beauties of poetry cannot be preserved in any language except that in which it was originally written, we learn the language."

A gentleman maintained that the art of printing had hurt real learning, by disseminating idle writings. JOHNSON. "Sir, if it had not been for the art of printing, we should now have no learning at all; for books would have perished faster than they could have been transcribed." This observation seems not just, considering for how many ages books were preserved by writing alone [1].

The same gentleman maintained, that a general diffusion of knowledge among a people was a disadvantage; for it made the vulgar rise above their humble sphere. JOHNSON. "Sir, while knowledge is a distinction, those who are possessed of it will naturally rise above those who are not. Merely to read and write was a distinction at first; but we see when reading and writing have become general, the common people keep their stations. And so, were higher attainments to become general, the effect would be the same."

"Goldsmith," he said, "referred every thing to vanity; his virtues and vices too were from that motive. He was not a social man. He never exchanged mind with you [2]."

We spent the evening at Mr. Hoole's Mr. Mickle, the excellent translator of "The Lusiad," was there. I have preserved little of the conversation of this evening Dr. Johnson said, "Thomson had a true poetical genius, the power of viewing every thing in a poetical light. His fault is such a cloud of words sometimes, that the sense can hardly peep through. Shiels, who compiled 'Cibber's Lives of the Poets [3],' was one day sitting with me. I took down Thomson, and read aloud a large portion of him, and then asked,—Is not this fine? Shiels having expressed the highest admiration—Well, sir (said I), I have omitted every other line."

I related a dispute between Goldsmith and Mr. Robert Dodsley, one day when they and I were dining at Tom Davies's, in 1762. Goldsmith asserted, that there was no poetry produced in this age. Dodsley appealed to his own Collection, and maintained, that though you could not find a palace like Dryden's "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," you had villages composed of very pretty houses; and he mentioned particularly "The Spleen." JOHNSON. "I think Dodsley gave up the question. He and Goldsmith said the same thing; only he said it in a softer manner than Goldsmith did; for he acknowledged there was no poetry, nothing that towered above the common mark. You may find wit and humour in verse, and yet no poetry. 'Hudidras' has a profusion of these; yet it is not to be reckoned a poem. 'The Spleen,' in Dodsley's Collection, on which you say he chiefly rested, is not poetry." BOSWELL. "Does not Gray's poetry, sir, tower above the common mark?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but we must attend to the difference between what men in general cannot do if they would, and what every man may do if he would. Sixteen-string Jack [4] towered

[1] The authour did not recollect that of the books preserved (and an infinite number was lost) all were confined to two languages. In modern times and modern languages, France and Italy alone produce more books in a given time than Greece and Rome: put England, Spain, Germany, and the northern kingdoms out of the question.—BLAKEWAY.

[2] [This seems not easy to understand. Poor Goldsmith was *social* to a fault; how he behaved in society is another matter; and as to "exchanging mind," his chief defect was, that he had no reserve whatsoever, and opened whatever he had in his mind with the utmost confidence of indiscretion, [see *passim*]. Dr. Johnson, perhaps, meant that he was too much of an egotist, and thought too much of personal triumph in conversation, to be a man of agreeable social habits; yet we know that Johnson himself always considered conversation as a kind of gladiatorial exercise.—ED.]

[3] See *ante*, note, p. 60

[4] A noted highwayman, who, after having been several times tried and acquitted, was at last hanged. He was remarkable for foppery in his dress, and particularly for wearing a bunch of sixteen strings at the knees of his breeches.—BOSWELL.

aoove the common mark." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, what is poetry?" "JOHNSON. Why, sir, it is much easier to say what it is not. We all *know* what light is; but it is not easy to *tell* what it is."

Hawk. Apoph. p. 214. [Gray, he said, on another occasion, was the very Torre [1] of poetry, he played his coruscations so speciously, that his steel-dust is mistaken by many for a shower of gold [2].]

On Friday, April 12, I dined with him at our friend Tom Davies's, where we met Mr. Cradock [3], of Leicestershire, authour of "Zobeide," a tragedy; a very pleasing gentleman, to whom my friend Dr. Farmer's very excellent Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare is addressed; and Dr. Harwood, who has written and published various works; particularly a fantastical translation of the New Testament, in modern phrase, and with a Socinian twist [4].

I introduced Aristotle's doctrine, in his "Art of Poetry," of "καθαρσις των παθηματων, the purging of the passions," as the purpose of tragedy [5]. "But how are the passions to be purged by terrour and pity?" said I, with an assumed air of ignorance, to incite him to talk, for which it was often necessary to employ some address. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you are to consider what is the meaning of purging in the original sense. It is to expel impurities from the human body. The mind is subject to the same imperfection. The passions are the great movers of human actions; but they are mixed with such impurities, that it is necessary they should be purged or refined by means of terrour and pity. For instance, ambition is a noble passion; but by seeing upon the stage, that a man who is so excessively ambitious as to raise himself by injustice is punished, we are terrified at the fatal consequences of such a passion. In the same manner a certain degree of resentment is necessary; but if we see that a man carries it too far, we pity the object of it, and are taught to moderate that passion." My record upon this occasion does great injustice to Johnson's expression, which was so forcible and brilliant, that Mr. Cradock whispered me, "O that his words were written in a book [6]!"

I observed, the great defect of the tragedy of "Othello" was, that it had not a moral; for that no man could resist the circumstances of suspicion which were artfully suggested to Othello's mind. JOHNSON. "In the first place, sir, we learn from Othello this very useful moral, not to make an unequal match; in the second place, we learn not to yield too readily to suspicion. The handkerchief is merely a trick, though a very pretty trick; but there are no other circumstances of reasonable suspicion, except what is related by Iago of Cassio's warm expressions concerning Desdemona in his sleep; and that depended entirely upon the assertion of one man. No, sir, I think Othello has more moral than almost any play."

Talking of a penurious gentleman of our acquaintance, Johnson said, "Sir, he is narrow, not so much from avarice, as from impotence to spend his money. He cannot find in his heart to pour out a bottle of wine; but he would not much care if it should sour."

He said, he wished to see "John Dennis's Critical Works" collected. Davies said, they would not sell. Dr. Johnson seemed to think otherwise.

Davies said of a well known dramatick authour [7], that "he lived upon *potted stories*, and that he made his way as Hannibal did, by vinegar; having begun by attacking people, particularly the players."

He reminded Dr. Johnson of Mr. Murphy's having paid him the highest compliment that ever was paid to a layman, by asking his pardon for repeating some oaths in the course of telling a story.

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[1] [A foreigner of that name, who, some years ago, exhibited a variety of splendid fire-works at Marybone Gardens.]

[2] [This and some subsequent extracts are from a collection of Dr. Johnson's "*Apophthegms, Sentiments, Opinions, and occasional Reflections*," made by Sir John Hawkins, and published in the last volume of his edition of Johnson's works.—ED.]

[3] [Who has since published Memoirs of his own Times, of which the Editor has made occasional use.—ED.]

[4] [He is more advantageously known by a work on the classics. This poor man had, about 1783, a stroke of the palsy, which rendered him a cripple, and, in 1788, he published, in the European Magazine, a letter, written to him in 1773 by Bishop Lowth, to show that the bishop, though no friend to dissenters, was kind and liberal towards him. Harwood concludes his appeal by saying, that, had he been a dishonest man, and could have conformed to the trinitarian worship of the church, he should not have been in indigent and necessitous circumstances. Bishop Lowth, he says, contributed, to the last year of his life, to relieve his wants. *European Magazine*, 1788, p. 413.—ED.]

[5] See an ingenious essay on this subject by the late Dr. Moor, Greek professor at Glasgow.—BOSWELL. See also a learned note on this passage of Aristotle, by Mr. Twining, in his admirable translation of the Poeticks, in which the various explanations of other criticks are considered, and in which Dr. Moor's essay is particularly discussed.—J. BOSWELL.

[6] [Perhaps in allusion to, "Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!"—*Job*, xix. 23.—HALL.]

[7] Probably Mr. Camberland.—ED.]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 210. [He never suffered any one to swear before him. When ———, a libertine, but a man of some note, was talking before him, and interlarding his stories with oaths, Johnson said, "Sir, all this swearing will do nothing for our story; I beg you will not swear." The narrator went on swearing: Johnson said, "I must again entreat you not to swear." He swore again; Johnson quitted the room.]

Johnson and I supped this evening at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in company with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Mr. Nairne, now one of the Scotch judges, with the title of Lord Dunsinan[1], and my very worthy friend, Sir William Forbes, of Pitsligo.

We discussed the question, whether drinking improved conversation and benevolence. Sir Joshua maintained, it did. JOHNSON. "No, sir: before dinner men meet with great inequality of understanding; and those who are conscious of their inferiority have the modesty not to talk. When they have drunk wine, every man feels himself happy, and loses that modesty, and grows impudent and vociferous: but he is not improved: he is only not sensible of his defects." Sir Joshua said the Doctor was talking of the effects of excess in wine; but that a moderate glass enlivened the mind, by giving a proper circulation to the blood. "I am," said he, "in very good spirits, when I get up in the morning. By dinner-time I am exhausted; wine puts me in the same state as when I got up: and I am sure that moderate drinking makes people talk better." JOHNSON. "No, sir; wine gives not light, gay, ideal, hilarity; but tumultuous, noisy, clamorous merriment. I have heard none of those drunken, —nay, drunken is a coarse word,—none of those *vinous* flights." SIR JOSHUA. "Because you have sat by, quite sober, and felt an envy of the happiness of those who were drinking." JOHNSON. "Perhaps, contempt. And, sir, it is not necessary to be drunk one's self, to relish the wit of drunkenness. Do we not judge of the drunken wit of the dialogue between Iago and Cassio, the most excellent in its kind, when we are quite sober? Wit is wit, by whatever means it is produced; and, if good, will appear so at all times. I admit that the spirits are raised by drinking, as by the common participation of any pleasure: cock-fighting or bear-baiting will raise the spirits of a company, as drinking does, though surely they will not improve conversation. I also admit, that there are some sluggish men who are improved by drinking; as there are fruits which are not good till they are rotten. There are such men, but they are medlars. I indeed allow that there have been a very few men of talents who were improved by drinking: but I maintain that I am right as to the effects of drinking in general: and let it be considered, that there is no position, however false in its universality, which is not true of some particular man." Sir William Forbes said, "Might not a man warmed with wine be like a bottle of beer, which is made brisker by being set before the fire?" "Nay," said Johnson, laughing, "I cannot answer that: that is too much for me."

I observed, that wine did some people harm, by inflaming, confusing, and irritating their minds; but that the experience of mankind had declared in favour of moderate drinking. JOHNSON. "Sir, I do not say it is wrong to produce self-complacency by drinking; I only deny that it improves the mind. When I drank wine[2], I scorned to drink it when in company. I have drunk many a bottle by myself; in the first place, because I had need of it to raise my spirits: in the second place, because I would have nobody to witness its effects upon me."

[At one period of his life, however, he was reconciled to the bottle. Sweet wines were his chief favourites; when none of these were before him, he would sometimes drink port with a lump of sugar in every glass. The strongest liquors, and in very large quantities, produced no other effect on him than moderate exhilaration. Once, and but once, he is known to have had his dose; a circumstance which he himself discovered, on finding one of his sesquipedalian words hang fire, he then started up, and gravely observed,—I think it time we should go to bed. "After a ten years' forbearance of every fluid except tea and sherbet, I drank," said he, "one glass of wine to the health of Sir Joshua Reynolds, on the evening of the day on which he was knighted. I never swallowed another drop, till old Madeira was prescribed to me as a cordial during my present indisposition; but this liquor did not relish as formerly, and I therefore discontinued it."] Hawk Apoph. p. 215.

He told us, "almost all his Ramblers[3]

[1] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 338.—ED.]

[2] [Wine-drinkers will not be much affected by the censure of one who, when he did drink wine, drank *alone*, and whose choice beverage was port in hasty draughts, *sweetened with sugar or capillaire*. See *ante*, v. i. p. 208.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 82; but the editor must observe—on the assertion made there by Mrs. Piozzi, "that the paper on Procrastination was written in Sir Joshua Reynolds's parlour"—that both she and Mr. Boswell appear to have been in error as to the date of the acquaintance between Sir Joshua and Dr. Johnson. See *note*, v. i. p.

were written just as they were wanted for the press; that he sent a certain portion of the copy of an essay, and wrote the remainder, while the former part of it was printing. When it was wanted, and he had fairly sat down to it, he was sure it would be done."

He said, that, for general improvement, a man should read whatever his immediate inclination prompts him to; though, to be sure, if a man has a science to learn, he must regularly and resolutely advance. He added, "What we read with inclination makes a much stronger impression. If we read without inclination, half the mind is employed in fixing the attention; so there is but one half to be employed on what we read." He told us, he read Fielding's "Amelia" through without stopping [1]. He said, "If a man begins to read in the middle of a book, and feels an inclination to go on, let him not quit it, to go to the beginning. He may, perhaps, not feel again the inclination."

Sir Joshua mentioned Mr. Cumberland's "Odes," which were just published. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, they would have been thought as good as odes commonly are, if Cumberland had not put his name to them; but a name immediately draws censure, unless it be a name that bears down every thing before it. Nay, Cumberland has made his 'Odes' subsidiary to the fame of another man [2]. They might have run well enough by themselves; but he has not only loaded them with a name, but has made them carry double."

We talked of the reviews, and Dr. Johnson spoke of them as he did at Thrale's [3]. Sir Joshua said, what I have often thought, that he wondered to find so much good writing employed in them, when the authours were to remain unknown, and so could not have the motive of fame. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, those who write in them, write well in order to be paid well."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"15th April, 1776.

"DEAREST MADAM,—When you called on Mrs. Thrale, I find by inquiry that she was really abroad. The same thing happened to Mrs. Montagu, of which I beg you to inform her, for she went likewise by my opinion. The denial, if it had been feigned, would not have pleased me. Your visits, however, are kindly paid, and very kindly taken. Reyn MSS.

"We are going to Bath this morning; but I could not part without telling you the real state of your visit.—I am, dearest madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Soon after this day, he went to Bath with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. I had never seen that beautiful city, and wished to take the opportunity of visiting it while Johnson was there. Having written to him, I received the following answer:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"DEAR SIR,—Why do you talk of neglect? When did I neglect you? If you will come to Bath, we shall all be glad to see you. Come, therefore, as soon as you can.

"But I have a little business for you at London. Bid Francis look in the paper drawer of the chest of drawers in my bedchamber, for two cases; one for the attorney-general, and one for the solicitor-general. They lie, I think, at the top of my papers; otherwise they are somewhere else, and will give me more trouble.

"Please to write to me immediately, if they can be found. Make my compliments to all our friends round the world, and to Mrs. Williams at home.—I am, sir, your, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON.

"Search for the papers as soon as you can, that, if it is necessary, I may write to you again before you come down."

On the 26th April, I went to Bath; and on my arrival at the Pelican inn, found lying for me an obliging invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, by whom I was agreeably entertained almost constantly during my stay. They were gone to the rooms: but there was a kind note from Dr. Johnson, that he should sit at home all the evening.

103. "The Rambler" was ended before they could have been acquainted.—ED.]

[1] We have here an involuntary testimony to the excellence of this admirable writer, to whom we have seen that Dr. Johnson *directly* allowed so little merit.—BOSWELL. Johnson appears to have been particularly pleased with the character of the heroine of this novel. "His attention to veracity," says Mrs. Piozzi, "was without equal or example;" and when I mentioned Clarissa as a perfect character, "On the contrary," said he, "you may observe there is always something which she prefers to truth." "Fielding's Amelia was the most pleasing heroine of all the romances," he said; "but that vile broken nose, never cured, ruined the sale of perhaps the only book, of which, being printed off (*published*) betimes one morning, a new edition was called for before night."—*Anecdotes*, p. 221.—MALONE.

[2] Mr. Romney, the painter, who has now deservedly established a high reputation.—BOSWELL. [A curious work might be written on the reputation of painters. Horace Walpole talks somewhere of "*Ramsey and Reynolds!*" and Haley also dedicated his lyre (such as it was) to Romney. What would a picture of Ramsey or Romney now bring at an auction?—ED.]

[3] See *ante*, p. 60.—ED.]

I went to him directly, and before Mr. and Mrs. Thrale returned, we had by ourselves some hours of tea-drinking and talk.

I shall group together such of his sayings as I preserved during the few days that I was at Bath.

Of a person[1] who differed from him in politicks, he said, "In private life he is a very honest gentleman; but I will not allow him to be so in publick life. People *may* be honest, though they are doing wrong: that is, between their Maker and them. But *we*, who are suffering by their pernicious conduct, are to destroy them. We are sure that [Burke] acts from interest. We know what his genuine principles were[2]. They who allow their passions to confound the distinctions between right and wrong, are criminal. They may be convinced; but they have not come honestly by their conviction."

It having been mentioned, I know not with what truth, that a certain female political writer[3], whose doctrines he disliked, had of late become very fond of dress, sat hours together at her toilet, and even put on rouge: JOHNSON. "She is better employed at her toilet, than using her pen. It is better she should be reddening her own cheeks, than blackening other people's characters."

He told us that "Addison wrote Budgell's papers in the Spectator, at least mended them so much, that he made them almost his own; and that Draper, Tonson's partner, assured Mrs. Johnson, that the much admired Epilogue to 'The Distressed Mother,' which came out in Budgell's name, was in reality written by Addison."

"The mode of government by one may be ill adapted to a small society, but is best for a great nation The characteristick of our own government at present is imbecility. The magistrates dare not call the guards, for fear of being hanged. The guards will not come, for fear of being given up to the blind rage of popular juries."

Of the fathers of one of our friends he observed, "He never clarified his notions, by filtrating them through other minds. He had a canal upon his estate, where at one place the bank was too low. I dug the canal deeper," said he.

He told me that "so long ago as 1748 he had read 'The Grave, a Poem[5],' but did not like it much." I differed from him, for though it is not equal throughout, and is seldom elegantly correct, it abounds in solemn thought and poetical imagery beyond the common reach. The world has differed from him; for the poem has passed through many editions, and is still much read by people of a serious cast of mind.

A literary lady of large fortune was mentioned, as one who did good to many, but by no means "by stealth," and instead of "blushing to find it fame," acted evidently from vanity. JOHNSON. "I have seen no beings who do as much good from benevolence, as she does, from whatever motive. If there are such under the earth, or in the clouds, I wish they would come up, or come down. What Soame Jenyns says upon this subject is not to be minded; he is a wit. No, sir; to act from pure benevolence is not possible for finite beings. Human benevolence is mingled with vanity, interest, or some other motive."

[The pension which Mrs. Montagu had lately settled on Miss Williams[6] would naturally account for this defence of that lady's *beneficence;* but it seems also to have induced Johnson to speak of her intellectual powers in a strain of panegyric as excessive as his former depreciation.] [Miss Reynolds relates that she had heard him speak of Mrs. Montagu in terms of high admiration. "Sir," he would say, "that lady exerts more *mind* in conversation than any person I ever met with: sir, she displays such powers of ratiocination—such radiations of intellectual excellence as are amazing!"] Ed Reyn. Recoll

He would not allow me to praise a lady[7] then at Bath; observing, "She does not gain upon me, sir; I think her empty-headed." He was, indeed, a stern critick upon characters and manners. Even Mrs. Thrale did not escape his friendly animadversion at times. When he and I were one day endeavouring to ascertain, article by article, how one of our friends[8] could possibly

[1] [Mr. Burke.—ED.]

[2] [He means, that, in early life, they, at the Club, knew that Burke was not what Johnson would call a *whig*. Mr. Burke ended as he began—

"This sun of empire, where he rose, he set!"—ED.]

[3] [Mrs. Macaulay.—ED.]

[4] [The elder Mr. Langton.—*Hawk. Mem.* It is not easy to understand how any *filtrating* could have cured a mind of such an error as this. —ED.]

[5] I am sorry that there are no memoirs of the Reverend Robert Blair, the authour of this poem. He was the representative of the ancient family of Blair of Blair, in Ayrshire; but the estate had descended to a female, and afterwards passed to the son of her husband by another marriage. He was minister of the parish of Athelstaneford, where Mr John Home was his successor; so that it may truly be called classick ground. His son, who is of the same name, and a man eminent for talents and learning, is now, with universal approbation, solicitor-general of Scotland. [He was afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, and highly venerated.—ED.]

[6] [See *ante*, p. 21.—ED.]

[7] [This has been supposed to be Miss Hannah More: yet it seems hard to conceive in what wayward fancy he could call her "*empty-headed*."—ED.]

[8] [Mr. Langton.—ED.]

spend as much money in his family as he told us he did, she interrupted us by a lively extravagant sally, on the expense of clothing his children, describing it in a very ludicrous and fanciful manner. Johnson looked a little angry, and said, "Nay, madam, when you are declaiming, declaim; and when you are calculating, calculate." At another time, when she said, perhaps affectedly, "I do n't like to fly." JOHNSON. "With *your* wings, madam, you *must* fly: but have a care, there are *clippers* abroad." How very well was this said, and how fully has experience proved the truth of it! But have they not *clipped* rather *rudely*, and gone a great deal *closer* than was necessary[1]?

Reyn. Recoll. [But though Dr. Johnson would, as Mrs. Piozzi has candidly confessed, treat her with occasional rudeness, he had a most sincere and tender regard for her, and no wonder; for she would, with great consideration and kindness, overlook his foibles and his asperities. One day, at her own table, he spoke so very roughly to her, that every one present was surprised that she could bear it so placidly, and on the ladies withdrawing, Miss Reynolds expressed great astonishment that Dr. Johnson should speak so harshly to her, but to this she said no more than "*O, dear good man!*" This simple reply appeared so strong a proof of her generous and affectionate friendship, that Miss Reynolds took the first opportunity of communicating it to Dr. Johnson, repeating her own animadversions which had produced it. He was much delighted with the information; and some time after, as he was lying back in his chair, seeming to be half asleep, but really, as it turned out, musing on this pleasing incident, he repeated, in a loud whisper, "O, dear good man!" This kind of soliloquy was a common habit of his, when any thing very flattering or very extraordinary engrossed his thoughts.]

A gentleman expressed a wish to go and live three years at Otaheité, or New Zealand, in order to obtain a full acquaintance with people so totally different from all that we have ever known, and be satisfied what pure nature can do for man. JOHNSON. "What could you learn, sir? What can savages tell, but what they themselves have seen? Of the past or the invisible they can tell nothing. The inhabitants of Otaheité and New Zealand are not in a state of pure nature; for it is plain they broke off from some other people. Had they grown out of the ground, you might have judged of a state of pure nature. Fanciful people may talk of a mythology being amongst them; but it must be invention. They have once had religion, which has been gradually debased. And what account of their religion can you suppose to be learnt from savages? Only consider, sir, our own state: our religion is in a book; we have an order of men whose duty it is to teach it; we have one day in the week set apart for it, and this is in general pretty well observed: yet ask the first ten gross men you meet, and hear what they can tell of their religion."

On Monday, April 29, he and I made an excursion to Bristol, where I was entertained with seeing him inquire upon the spot into the authenticity of "Rowley's poetry," as I had seen him inquire upon the spot into the authenticity of "Ossian's poetry." George Catcot, the pewterer, who was as zealous for Rowley as Dr. Hugh Blair was for Ossian (I trust my reverend friend will excuse the comparison), attended us at our inn, and with a triumphant air of lively simplicity, called out, "I 'll make Dr. Johnson a convert." Dr. Johnson, at his desire, read aloud some of Chatterton's fabricated verses, while Catcot stood at the back of his chair, moving himself like a pendulum, and beating time with his feet, and now and then looking into Dr. Johnson's face, wondering that he was not yet convinced. We called on Mr. Barret, the surgeon, and saw some of the *originals*, as they were called, which were executed very artificially; but from a careful inspection of them, and a consideration of the circumstances with which they were attended, we were quite satisfied of the imposture, which, indeed, has been clearly demonstrated from internal evidence, by several able critics[2].

Honest Catcot seemed to pay no attention whatever to any objections, but insisted, as an end of all controversy, that we should go with him to the tower of the church of St. Mary, Redcliff, and *view with our own eyes* the ancient chest in which the manuscripts were found[3]. To this Dr. Johnson good-naturedly agreed; and, though troubled with a shortness of breathing, laboured up a long flight of steps, till we came to the place where the wondrous chest stood. "*There*," said Catcot, with a bouncing confident credulity, "*there* is

[1] [This alludes to the many sarcastic observations published against Mrs. Piozzi, on her lamentable marriage, and particularly to Baretti's brutal strictures in the European Magazine for 1788; so brutal, that Mr. Boswell, with all his enmity towards her, could not approve of them —ED.]

[2] Mr. Tyrwhitt, Mr. Warton, Mr. Malone.—BOSWELL.

[3] [This *naïveté* resembles the style of evidence which Johnson so pleasantly ridicules in the IDLER. "Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the protestant establishment; he has known those who saw the bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a warming-pan."—*Idler*, No. 10. —ED.]

the very chest itself." After this *ocular demonstration*, there was no more to be said. He brought to my recollection a Scotch Highlander, a man of learning too, and who had seen the world, attesting, and at the same time giving his reasons for, the authenticity of Fingal: "I have heard all that poem when I was young." "Have you, sir? Pray what have you heard?" "I have heard Ossian, Oscar, and *every one of them*."

Johnson said of Chatterton, "This is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things." [And of the merit of the poems admitted on both sides of the controversy, he said, "It is a sword that cuts both ways. It is as wonderful that a boy of sixteen years old should have stored his mind with such a strain of ideas and images, as to suppose that such ease of versification and elegance of language were produced by Rowley in the time of Edward the Fourth."] Hawk. Apoph. p. 208.

We were by no means pleased with our inn at Bristol. "Let us see now," said I, "how we should describe it." Johnson was ready with his raillery. "Describe it, sir? Why, it was so bad, that—Boswell wished to be in Scotland!"

After Dr. Johnson returned to London[1], I was several times with him at his house, where I occasionally slept, in the room that had been assigned for me. I dined with him at Dr. Taylor's, at General Oglethorpe's, and at General Paoli's. To avoid a tedious minuteness, I shall group together what I have preserved of his conversation during this period also, without specifying each scene where it passed, except one, which will be found so remarkable as certainly to deserve a very particular relation. Where the place or the persons do not contribute to the zest of the conversation, it is unnecessary to encumber my page with mentioning them. To know of what vintage our wine is, enables us to judge of its value, and to drink it with more relish: but to have the produce of each vine of one vineyard, in the same year, kept separate, would serve no purpose. To know that our wine (to use an advertising phrase) is "of the stock of an ambassadour lately deceased," heightens its flavour: but it signifies nothing to know the bin where each bottle was once deposited[2].

"Garrick," he observed, "does not play the part of Archer in the 'Beaux Stratagem' well. The gentleman should break through the footman, which is not the case as he does it[3]."

"Where there is no education, as in savage countries, men will have the upper hand of women. Bodily strength, no doubt, contributes to this; but it would be so, exclusive of that; for it is mind that always governs. When it comes to dry understanding, man has the better."

"The little volumes entitled '*Respublicæ*[4],' which are very well done, were a bookseller's work."

"There is much talk of the misery which we cause to the brute creation; but they are recompensed by existence. If they were not useful to man, and therefore protected by him, they would not be nearly so numerous." This argument is to be found in the able and benignant Hutchinson's "Moral Philosophy." But the question is, whether the animals who endure such sufferings of various kinds, for the service and entertainment of man, would accept of existence upon the terms on which they have it. Madame de Sevigné, who, though she had many enjoyments, felt with delicate sensibility the prevalence of misery, complains of the task of existence having been imposed upon her without her consent.

"That man is never happy for the present is so true, that all his relief from unhappiness is only forgetting himself for a little while. Life is a progress from want to want, not from enjoyment to enjoyment.'

"Though many men are nominally intrusted with the administration of hospitals and other publick institutions, almost all the good is done by one man, by whom the rest are driven on; owing to confidence in him and indolence in them."

"Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son[5], I think, might be made a very pretty book Take out the immorality, and it should be put into the hands of every young gentleman. An elegant manner and easiness of behaviour are acquired gradually and imperceptibly. No man can say, 'I 'll be genteel.' There are ten genteel women for

[1] [It appears from his letters to Mrs. Thrale, that he left Bath on Friday night, the 3d of May, and arrived in London by seven o'clock next day. On Sunday, the 5th, and Tuesday, the 7th, he dined with Dr Taylor: on Wednesday, the 8th, with General Oglethorpe; and on Thursday, the 9th with General Paoli.—Ed.]

[2] Notwithstanding this elaborate illustration, drawn from the cellar, Mr. Boswell's readers are best pleased when his diligence has enabled him to give the actual dialogue, with all its details.—Ed.]

[3] [Garrick, on the other hand, denied that Johnson was capable of distinguishing the *gentleman* from the *footman*. See *ante*, p. 44 —Ed.]

[4] [Accounts of the principal states of Europe —Ed.]

[5] ["A pretty book" was made up from these letters by the late Dr. Trusler, entitled "Principles of Politeness," and was, some years ago, commonly "put into the hands of young gentlemen."—Hall.]

one genteel man, because they are more restrained. A man without some degree of restraint is insufferable; but we are all less restrained than women. Were a woman sitting in company to put out her legs before her as most men do, we should be tempted to kick them in." No man was a more attentive and nice observer of behaviour in those in whose company he happened to be than Johnson, or, however strange it may seem to many, had a higher estimation of its refinements.

Piozzi, p. 222. [Mrs. Thrale one day commended a young lady for her beauty and pretty behaviour, to whom she thought no objections could have been made. "I saw her (said Dr. Johnson) take a pair of scissors in her left hand; and though her father is now become a nobleman, and as you say excessively rich, I should, were I a youth of quality ten years hence, hesitate between a girl so neglected, and a *negro* [1]."]

Reyn. Recol. [It was amazing—so short-sighted as he was—how very observant he was of appearances in dress and behaviour, nay, even of the deportment of servants while waiting at table. One day, as his man Frank was attending at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, he observed with some emotion, that he had placed the salver under his arm. Nor would the conduct of the company—blind as he was to his own many and strange peculiarities—escape his animadversion on some occasions. He thought the use of water glasses a strange perversion of the idea of refinement, and had a great dislike to the use of a pocket handkerchief at meals, when, if he happened to have occasion for one, he would rise from his chair and go to some distance, with his back to the company, and perform the operation as silently as possible.]

Lord Elliot informs me, that one day when Johnson and he were at dinner in a gentleman's house in London, upon Lord Chesterfield's Letters being mentioned, Johnson surprised the company by this sentence: "Every man of any education would rather be called a rascal, than accused of deficiency in *the graces*." Mr. Gibbon, who was present, turned to a lady who knew Johnson well, and lived much with him, and in his quaint manner, tapping his box, addressed her thus: "Do n't you think, madam (looking towards Johnson), that among *all* your acquaintance, you could find *one* exception?" The lady smiled, and seemed to acquiesce [2].

"I read (said he), Sharpe's Letters on Italy [3] over again, when I was at Bath. There is a great deal of matter in them."

"Mrs. Williams was angry that Thrale's family did not send regularly to her every time they heard from me while I was in the Hebrides. Little people are apt to be jealous: but they should not be jealous; for they ought to consider, that superiour attention will necessarily be paid to superiour fortune or rank. Two persons may have equal merit, and on that account may have an equal claim to attention; but one of them may have also fortune and rank, and so may have a double claim."

Talking of his notes on Shakspeare, he said, "I despise those who do not see that I am right in the passage where *as* is repeated, and 'asses of great charge' intro-

[1] "The child who took a pair of scissors in her left hand is now a woman of quality, highly respected, and would *cut* us, I conclude, most deservedly, if more were said on the subject."—*Piozzi MS.* [The editor believes that the lady was the eldest daughter of Mr. Lyttelton, afterwards Lord Westcote, married to Sir Richard Hoare. She was born in Jamaica, and thence, perhaps, Johnson's strange allusion to the negro. It was Johnson's hatred to all the Lytteltons which inflamed this little accident to such a ridiculous size.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Colman, in his "*Random Records*," lately published, has given a lively sketch of the appearance and manners of Johnson and Gibbon in society. "The learned Gibbon was a curious counterbalance to the learned (may I not say *less* learned?) Johnson. Their manners and taste, both in writing and conversation, were as different as their habiliments. On the day I first sat down with Johnson, in his rusty brown suit, and his black worsted stockings, Gibbon was placed opposite to me in a suit of flowered velvet, with a bag and sword. Each had his measured phraseology; and Johnson's famous parallel, between Dryden and Pope, might be loosely parodied, in reference to himself and Gibbon.—Johnson's style was grand, and Gibbon's elegant; the stateliness of the former was sometimes pedantick, and the polish of the latter was occasionally finical. Johnson marched to kettle-drums and trumpets; Gibbon moved to flutes and hautboys: Johnson hewed passages through the Alps, while Gibbon levelled walks through parks and gardens.—Mauled as I had been by Johnson, Gibbon poured balm upon my bruises, by condescending, once or twice, in the course of the evening, to talk with me:—the great historian was light and playful, suiting his matter to the capacity of the boy; but it was done *more suo;*—still his mannerism prevailed;—still he tapped his snuff-box,—still he smirked, and smiled; and rounded his periods with the same air of good-breeding, as if he were conversing with men.—His mouth mellifluous as Plato's, was a round hole, nearly in the centre of his visage."—Vol. i. p. 121.—Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Samuel Sharpe, a surgeon, who travelled for his health, and whose representation of Italian manners was supposed to be tinged by the ill humour of a valetudinarian. Baretti took up the defence of his country, and a smart controversy ensued which made some noise at the time.—Ed.]

duced. That on 'To be, or not to be,' is disputable[1]."

A gentleman, whom I found sitting with him one morning, said, that in his opinion the character of an infidel was more detestable than that of a man notoriously guilty of an atrocious crime. I differed from him, because we are surer of the odiousness of the one, than of the errour of the other. JOHNSON "Sir, I agree with him; for the infidel would be guilty of any crime if he were inclined to it."

"Many things which are false are transmitted from book to book, and gain credit in the world. One of these is the cry against the evil of luxury. Now the truth is, that luxury produces much good. Take the luxury of buildings in London. Does it not produce real advantage in the conveniency and elegance of accommodation, and this all from the exertion of industry? People will tell you, with a melancholy face, how many builders are in gaol. It is plain they are in gaol, not for building; for rents are not fallen. A man gives half-a-guinea for a dish of green peas. How much gardening does this occasion? how many labourers must the competition to have such things early in the market keep in employment? You will hear it said, very gravely, 'Why was not the half-guinea, thus spent in luxury, given to the poor? To how many might it have afforded a good meal?' Alas! has it not gone to the *industrious* poor, whom it is better to support than the *idle* poor? You are much surer that you are doing good when you *pay* money to those who work, as the recompense of their labour, than when you *give* money merely in charity. Suppose the ancient luxury of a dish of peacock's brains were to be revived, how many carcasses would be left to the poor at a cheap rate! and as to the rout that is made about people who are ruined by extravagance, it is no matter to the nation that some individuals suffer. When so much general productive exertion is the consequence of luxury, the nation does not care though there are debtors in gaol: nay, they would not care though their creditors were there too"

The uncommon vivacity of General Oglethorpe's mind, and variety of knowledge, having sometimes made his conversation seem too desultory; Johnson observed, "Oglethorpe, sir, never *completes* what he has to say."

He on the same account made a similar remark on Patrick Lord Elibank; 'Sir, there is nothing *conclusive* in his talk."

When I complained of having dined at a splendid table without hearing one sentence of conversation worthy of being remembered, he said, "Sir, there seldom is any such conversation." BOSWELL. "Why then meet at table?" JOHNSON. "Why to eat and drink together, and to promote kindness; and, sir, this is better done when there is no solid conversation: for when there is, people differ in opinion, and get into bad humour, or some of the company, who are not capable of such conversation, are left out, and feel themselves uneasy. It was for this reason Sir Robert Walpole said, he always talked [coarsely] at his table, because in that all could join." ED.

Being irritated by hearing a gentleman[2] ask Mr. Levet a variety of questions concerning him, when he was sitting by, he broke out, "Sir, you have but two topicks, yourself and me. I am sick of both." "A man (said he) should not talk of himself, nor much of any particular person. He should take care not to be made a proverb; and, therefore, should avoid having any one topick of which people can say, 'We shall hear him upon it.' There was a Dr. Oldfield, who was always talking of the Duke of Marlborough. He came into a coffee-house one day, and told that his grace had spoken in the House of Lords for half an hour. 'Did he indeed speak for half an hour?' (said Belchier, the surgeon).—'Yes.'—'And what did he say of Dr. Oldfield?'—'Nothing.'—'Why then, sir, he was very ungrateful; for Dr. Oldfield could not have spoken for a quarter of an hour, without saying something of him.'"

"Every man is to take existence on the terms on which it is given to him. To some men it is given on condition of not taking liberties, which other men may take without much harm. One may drink wine, and be nothing the worse for it: on another, wine may have effects so inflammatory as to injure him both in body and mind, and perhaps make him commit something for which he may deserve to be hanged."

"Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' have not that painted form which is the taste of this age; but it is a book which will always sell, it has such a stability of dates, such a certainty of facts, and such a punctuality of citation. I never before read Scotch history with certainty."

I asked him whether he would advise me

[1] It may be observed, that Mr. Malone, in his very valuable edition of Shakspeare, has fully vindicated Dr. Johnson from the idle censures which the first of these notes has given rise to. The interpretation of the other passage, which Dr. Johnson allows to be *disputable*, he has clearly shown to be erroneous.—BOSWELL. [The first note is on a passage in Hamlet, act 5. scene ii.—ED.

[2] [Probably Mr. Boswell himself, who frequently practised this mode of obtaining information.—ED.]

to read the Bible with a commentary, and what commentaries he would recommend. JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir, I would have you read the Bible with a commentary; and I would recommend Lowth and Patrick on the Old Testament, and Hammond on the New."

During my stay in London this spring, I solicited his attention to another law case, in which I was engaged. In the course of a contested election for the borough of Dunfermline, which I attended as one of my friend Colonel (afterward Sir Archibald) Campbell's counsel, one of his political agents—who was charged with having been unfaithful to his employer, and having deserted to the opposite party for a pecuniary reward—attacked very rudely in the newspapers the Reverend Mr. James Thomson, one of the ministers of that place, on account of a supposed allusion to him in one of his sermons. Upon this the minister, on a subsequent Sunday, arraigned him by name from the pulpit with some severity; and the agent, after the sermon was over, rose up and asked the minister aloud, "What bribe he had received for telling so many lies from the chair of verity[1]?" I was present at this very extraordinary scene. The person arraigned, and his father and brother, who also had a share both of the reproof from the pulpit and in the retaliation, brought an action against Mr. Thomson, in the Court of Session, for defamation and damages, and I was one of the counsel for the reverend defendant. The liberty of the pulpit was our great ground of defence; but we argued also on the provocation of the previous attack, and on the instant retaliation. The Court of Session, however,—the fifteen judges, who are at the same time the jury,—decided against the minister, contrary to my humble opinion; and several of them expressed themselves with indignation against him. He was an aged gentleman, formerly a military chaplain, and a man of high spirit and honour. Johnson was satisfied that the judgment was wrong, and dictated to me, in confutation of it, an argument, [which will be found in the Appendix.]

When I read [the argument] to Mr. Burke, he was highly pleased, and exclaimed, "Well, he does his work in a workmanlike manner[2]."

Mr. Thomson wished to bring the cause by appeal before the house of lords, but was dissuaded by the advice of the noble person who lately presided so ably in that most honourable house, and who was then attorney-general. As my readers will no doubt be glad also to read the opinion of this eminent man upon the same subject, I shall here insert it.

CASE.

"There is herewith laid before you,

"1. Petition for the Reverend Mr. James Thomson, minister of Dunfermline.

"2. Answers thereto

"3. Copy of the judgment of the Court of Session upon both.

"4. Notes of the opinions of the judges, being the reasons upon which their decree is grounded.

"These papers you will please to peruse, and give your opinion,

"Whether there is a probability of the above decree of the Court of Session being reversed, if Mr. Thomson should appeal from the same?"

"I don't think the appeal advisable; not only because the value of the judgment is in no degree adequate to the expense; but because there are many chances, that upon the general complexion of the case, the impression will be taken to the disadvantage of the appellant.

"It is impossible to approve the style of that sermon. But the *complaint* was not less ungracious from that man, who had behaved so ill by his original libel, and at the time when he received the reproach he complains of. In the last article all the plaintiffs are equally concerned. It struck me also with some wonder, that the judges should think so much fervour apposite to the occasion of reproving the defendant for a little excess.

"Upon the matter, however, I agree with them in condemning the behaviour of the minister, and in thinking it a subject fit for ecclesiastical censure; and even for an action, if any individual could qualify[3] a wrong, and a damage arising from it. But this I doubt. The circumstance of publishing the reproach in a pulpit, though extremely indecent, and culpable in another view, does not constitute a different sort of wrong, or any other rule of law than would

[1] [*A Gallicism*, which has, it appears, with so many others, become vernacular in Scotland. A pulpit is in French called "*chaire de vérité.*"—ED.]

[2] As a proof of Dr. Johnson's extraordinary powers of composition, it appears from the original manuscript of this excellent dissertation, of which he dictated the first eight paragraphs on the 10th of May, and the remainder on the 13th, that there are in the whole only seven corrections, or rather variations, and those not considerable. Such were at once the vigorous and accurate emanations of his mind.—BOSWELL.

[3] It is curious to observe that Lord Thurlow has here, perhaps, in compliment to North Britain, made use of a term of the Scotch law, which to an English reader may require explanation. To *qualify* a wrong, is to point out and establish it.—BOSWELL.

have obtained, if the same words had been pronounced elsewhere. I don't know whether there be any difference in the law of Scotland, in the definition of slander, before the commissaries, or the Court of Session. The common law of England does not give way to actions for every reproachful word. An action cannot be brought for general damages upon any words which import less than an offence cognizable by law; consequently no action could have been brought here for the words in question. Both laws admit the truth to be a justification in action *for words;* and the law of England does the same in actions for libels. The judgment, therefore, seems to me to have been wrong, in that the court repelled that defence. "E. THURLOW."

I am now to record a very curious incident in Dr. Johnson's life, which fell under my own observation; of which *pars magna fui*, and which I am persuaded will, with the liberal-minded, be much to his credit.

My desire of being acquainted with celebrated men of every description had made me, much about the same time, obtain an introduction to Dr. Samuel Johnson and to John Wilkes, Esq. Two men more different could perhaps not be selected out of all mankind. They had even attacked one another with some asperity in their writings; yet I lived in habits of friendship with both. I could fully relish the excellence of each; for I have ever delighted in that intellectual chymistry, which can separate good qualities from evil in the same person.

Sir John Pringle, "mine own friend and my father's friend," between whom and Dr. Johnson I in vain wished to establish an acquaintance, as I respected and lived in intimacy with both of them, observed to me once, very ingeniously, "It is not in friendship as in mathematicks, where two things, each equal to a third, are equal between themselves. You agree with Johnson as a middle quality, and you agree with me as a middle quality; but Johnson and I should not agree." Sir John was not sufficiently flexible; so I desisted; knowing, indeed, that the repulsion was equally strong on the part of Johnson; who, I know not from what cause, unless his being a Scotchman, had formed a very erroneous opinion of Sir John. But I conceived an irresistible wish, if possible, to bring Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes together. How to manage it, was a nice and difficult matter. [for Johnson's dislike of Mr. Wilkes was so great that it extended even to his connexions. He happened to dine one day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's with a large and distinguished company, amongst which were Mr. Wilkes's brother, Israel, and his lady. In the course of conversation, Mr. Israel Wilkes was about to make some remark, when Johnson suddenly stopped him with, "I hope, sir, what you are going to say may be better worth hearing than what you have already said." This rudeness shocked and spread a gloom over the whole party, particularly as Mr. Israel Wilkes was a gentleman of a very amiable character and of refined taste, and, what Dr. Johnson little suspected, a very loyal subject. Johnson afterwards owned to Miss Reynolds that he was very sorry that he had "*snubbed* Wilkes, as his wife was present." Miss Reynolds replied that he should be sorry for many reasons. "No," said Johnson, who was very reluctant to apologize for offences of this nature; "no, I only regret it because his wife was by." Miss Reynolds believed that he had no kind of motive for this incivility to Mr. I. Wilkes but disgust at his brother's political principles.]

Reyn. Recol.

My worthy booksellers and friends, Messieurs Dilly in the Poultry, at whose hospitable and well-covered table I have seen a greater number of literary men than at any other, except that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, had invited me to meet Mr. Wilkes and some more gentlemen on Wednesday, May 15. "Pray," said I, "let us have Dr. Johnson." "What, with Mr. Wilkes? not for the world," said Mr. Edward Dilly: "Dr. Johnson would never forgive me." "Come," said I, "if you 'll let me negotiate for you, I will be answerable that all shall go well." DILLY. "Nay, if you will take it upon you, I am sure I shall be very happy to see them both here."

Notwithstanding the high veneration which I entertained for Dr. Johnson, I was sensible that he was sometimes a little actuated by the spirit of contradiction, and by means of that I hoped I should gain my point. I was persuaded that if I had come upon him with a direct proposal, "Sir, will you dine in company with Jack Wilkes?" he would have flown into a passion, and would probably have answered, "Dine with Jack Wilkes, sir! I 'd as soon dine with Jack Ketch [1]." I, therefore, while we were sitting quietly by ourselves at his house in an evening, took occasion to open my plan thus: "Mr. Dilly, sir, sends his respectful compliments to you, and would be happy if you would do him the honour to dine with him on Wednesday next along with me, as I must soon go to Scotland." JOHNSON. "Sir, I am obliged to Mr. Dilly. I will wait upon him—." BOSWELL. "Provided, sir, I suppose, that the company which he is to have is agreeable to

[1] This has been circulated as if actually said by Johnson; when the truth is it was only *supposed* by me.—BOSWELL

you?" JOHNSON. "What do you mean, sir? What do you take me for? Do you think I am so ignorant of the world as to imagine that I am to prescribe to a gentleman what company he is to have at his table?" BOSWELL. "I beg your pardon, sir, for wishing to prevent you from meeting people whom you might not like. Perhaps he may have some of what he calls his patriotick friends with him." JOHNSON. "Well, sir, and what then? What care *I* for his *patriotick friends*? Poh!" BOSWELL. "I should not be surprised to find Jack Wilkes there." JOHNSON. "And if Jack Wilkes *should* be there, what is that to *me*, sir? My dear friend, let us have no more of this. I am sorry to be angry with you; but really it is treating me strangely to talk to me as if I could not meet any company whatever, occasionally." BOSWELL. "Pray forgive me, sir: I meant well. But you shall meet whoever comes, for me." Thus I secured him, and told Dilly that he would find him very well pleased to be one of his guests on the day appointed.

Upon the much expected Wednesday, I called on him about half an hour before dinner, as I often did when we were to dine out together, to see that he was ready in time, and to accompany him. I found him buffeting his books, as upon a former occasion [1], covered with dust, and making no preparation for going abroad. "How is this, sir?" said I. "Don't you recollect that you are to dine at Mr. Dilly's?" JOHNSON. "Sir, I did not think of going to Dilly's: it went out of my head. I have ordered dinner at home with Mrs. Williams." BOSWELL. "But, my dear sir, you know you were engaged to Mr. Dilly, and I told him so. He will expect you, and will be much disappointed if you don't come." JOHNSON. "You must talk to Mrs. Williams about this."

Here was a sad dilemma. I feared that what I was so confident I had secured would yet be frustrated. He had accustomed himself to show Mrs. Williams such a degree of humane attention, as frequently imposed some restraint upon him; and I knew that if she should be obstinate, he would not stir. I hastened down stairs to the blind lady's room, and told her I was in great uneasiness, for Dr. Johnson had engaged to me to dine this day at Mr. Dilly's, but that he had told me he had forgotten his engagement, and had ordered dinner at home. "Yes, sir," said she, pretty peevishly, "Dr. Johnson is to dine at home." "Madam," said I, "his respect for you is such, that I know he will not leave you, unless you absolutely desire it. But as you have so much of his company, I hope you will be good enough to forego it for a day, as Mr. Dilly is a very worthy man, has frequently had agreeable parties at his house for Dr. Johnson, and will be vexed if the Doctor neglects him to-day. And then, madam, be pleased to consider my situation; I carried the message, and I assured Mr. Dilly that Dr. Johnson was to come; and no doubt he has made a dinner, and invited a company, and boasted of the honour he expected to have. I shall be quite disgraced if the Doctor is not there." She gradually softened to my solicitations, which were certainly as earnest as most entreaties to ladies upon any occasion, and was graciously pleased to empower me to tell Dr. Johnson, "that, all things considered, she thought he should certainly go." I flew back to him, still in dust, and careless of what should be the event, "indifferent in his choice to go or stay;" but as soon as I had announced to him Mrs. Williams's consent, he roared, "Frank, a clean shirt," and was very soon dressed. When I had him fairly seated in a hackney-coach with me, I exulted as much as a fortune-hunter who has got an heiress into a post-chaise with him to set out for Gretna-Green.

When we entered Mr. Dilly's drawing-room, he found himself in the midst of a company he did not know. I kept myself snug and silent, watching how he would conduct himself. I observed him whispering to Mr. Dilly, "Who is that gentleman, sir?" "Mr. Arthur Lee." JOHNSON. "Too, too, too" (under his breath), which was one of his habitual mutterings. Mr. Arthur Lee could not but be very obnoxious to Johnson, for he was not only a *patriot*, but an *American*. He was afterwards minister from the United States at the court of Madrid. "And who is the gentleman in lace?" "Mr. Wilkes, sir." This information confounded him still more; he had some difficulty to restrain himself, and, taking up a book, sat down upon a window-seat and read, or at least kept his eye upon it intently for some time, till he composed himself. His feelings, I dare say, were awkward enough. But he no doubt recollected his having rated me for supposing that he could be at all disconcerted by any company, and he, therefore, resolutely set himself to behave quite as an easy man of the world, who could adapt himself at once to the disposition and manners of those whom he might chance to meet.

The cheering sound of "Dinner is upon the table," dissolved his reverie, and we *all* sat down without any symptom of ill humour. There were present, beside Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Arthur Lee, who was an old companion of mine when he studied physick at Edinburgh, Mr. (now Sir John) Miller [2], Dr

[1] See page 51 of this volume.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Of Bath Easton See *ante*, vol i p. 515 ED.]

Lettsom, and Mr. Slater, the druggist. Mr. Wilkes placed himself next to Dr. Johnson, and behaved to him with so much attention and politeness, that he gained upon him insensibly. No man ate more heartily than Johnson, or loved better what was nice and delicate. Mr. Wilkes was very assiduous in helping him to some fine veal. "Pray give me leave, sir—It is better here—A little of the brown—Some fat, sir—A little of the stuffing—Some gravy—Let me have the pleasure of giving you some butter—Allow me to recommend a squeeze of this orange; or the lemon, perhaps, may have more zest." "Sir; sir, I am obliged to you, sir," cried Johnson, bowing, and turning his head to him with a look for some time of "surly virtue[1]," but, in a short while, of complacency.

Foote being mentioned, Johnson said, "He is not a good mimick." One of the company added, "A merry-andrew, a buffoon." JOHNSON. "But he has wit too, and is not deficient in ideas, or in fertility and variety of imagery, and not empty of reading; he has knowledge enough to fill up his part. One species of wit he has in an eminent degree, that of escape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, sir, when you think you have got him—like an animal that jumps over your head.—Then he has a great range for wit; he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse. Garrick is under many restraints from which Foote is free." WILKES. "Garrick's wit is more like Lord Chesterfield's." JOHNSON. "The first time I was in company with Foote was at Fitzherbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting not to mind him. But the dog was so very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back upon my chair, and fairly laugh it out. No, Sir, he was irresistible[2]. He upon one occasion experienced, in an extraordinary degree, the efficacy of his powers of entertaining. Amongst the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a small-beer brewer, and he was to have a share of the profits for procuring customers amongst his numerous acquaintance. Fitzherbert was one who took his small-beer; but it was so bad that the servants resolved not to drink it. They were at some loss how to notify their resolution, being afraid of offending their master, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At last they fixed upon a little black boy, who was rather a favourite, to be their deputy, and deliver their remonstrance; and, having invested him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr. Fitzherbert, in all their names, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's small-beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzherbert's, and this boy served at table; he was so delighted with Foote's stories, and merriment, and grimace, that when he went down stairs, he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small beer.'"

Somebody observed that Garrick could not have done this. WILKES. "Garrick would have made the small-beer still smaller. He is now leaving the stage; but he will play *Scrub* all his life." I knew that Johnson would let nobody attack Garrick but himself, as Garrick said to me, and I had heard him praise his liberality; so to bring out his commendation of his celebrated pupil, I said, loudly, "I have heard Garrick is liberal." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, I know that Garrick has given away more money than any man in England that I am acquainted with, and that not from ostentatious views. Garrick was very poor when he began life; so when he came to have money, he probably was very unskilful in giving away, and saved when he should not. But Garrick began to be liberal as soon as he could; and I am of opinion, the reputation of avarice which he has had has been very lucky for him, and prevented his having many enemies. You despise a man for avarice, but do not hate him. Garrick might have been much better attacked for living with more splendour than is suitable to a player; if they had had the wit to have assaulted him in that quarter, they might have galled him more. But they have kept clamouring about his avarice, which has rescued him from much obloquy and envy."

Talking of the great difficulty of obtaining authentick information for biography, Johnson told us, "When I was a young fellow, I wanted to write the 'Life of Dryden[3],' and, in order to get materials, I applied to the only two persons then alive who had seen him; these were old Swinney[4], and old Cibber. Swinney's informa-

[1] Johnson's "London, a Poem," v. 145.—BOSWELL.

[2] Foote told me, that Johnson said of him, "For loud, obstreperous, broad-faced mirth, I know not his equal."—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p 32.—ED.]

[3] [This was probably for "Cibber's Lives," as well as the "Life of Shakspeare," mentioned *ante*, p. 60, *n.*—1 D.]

[4] Owen M'Swinney, who died in 1754, and bequeathed his fortune to Mrs. Woffington, the actress. He had been a manager of Drury-lane

tion was no more than this, 'That at Will's coffee-house Dryden had a particular chair for himself, which was set by the fire in winter, and was then called his winter chair; and that it was carried out for him to the balcony in summer, and was then called his summer chair.' Cibber could tell no more but 'that he remembered him a decent old man, arbiter of critical disputes at Will's.' You are to consider that Cibber was then at a great distance from Dryden, had perhaps one leg only in the room, and durst not draw in the other." BOSWELL. "Yet Cibber was a man of observation?" JOHNSON. "I think not." BOSWELL. "You will allow his 'Apology' to be well done." JOHNSON. "Very well done, to be sure, sir. That book is a striking proof of the justice of Pope's remark:

'Each might his several province well command,
Would all but stoop to what they understand.'"

BOSWELL. "And his plays are good." JOHNSON. "Yes; but that was his trade; *l'esprit du corps;* he had been all his life among players and play-writers. I wondered that he had so little to say in conversation, for he had kept the best company, and learnt all that can be got by the ear. He abused Pindar to me, and then showed me an ode of his own, with an absurd couplet, making a linnet soar on an eagle's wing[1]. I told him that when the ancients made a simile, they always made it like something real."

Mr. Wilkes remarked, that "among all the bold flights of Shakspeare's imagination, the boldest was making Birnam-wood march to Dunsinane; creating a wood where there never was a shrub; a wood in Scotland! ha! ha! ha!" And he also observed, that "the clannish slavery of the Highlands of Scotland was the single exception to Milton's remark of 'the mountain nymph, sweet Liberty,' being worshipped in all hilly countries." "When I was at Inverary," said he, "on a visit to my old friend Archibald, Duke of Argyle, his dependants congratulated me on being such a favourite of his grace. I said, 'It is, then, gentlemen, truly lucky for me; for if I had displeased the duke, and he had wished it, there is not a Campbell among you but would have been ready to bring John Wilkes's head to him in a charger. It would have been only

'Off with his head! so much for *Aylesbury.*'

I was then member for Aylesbury."

Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes talked of the contested passage in Horace's "Art of Poetry," *Difficile est propriè communia dicere.* Mr. Wilkes, according to my note, gave the interpretation thus: "It is difficult to speak with propriety of common things; as, if a poet had to speak of Queen Caroline drinking tea, he must endeavour to avoid the vulgarity of cups and saucers." But, upon reading my note, he tells me that he meant to say, that "the word *communia* being a Roman law term, signifies here things *communis juris*, that is to say, what have never yet been treated by any body; and this appears clearly from what followed,

'——————Tuque
Rectiùs Iliacum carmen deducis in actus,
Quàm si proferres ignota indictaque primus.'

You will easier make a tragedy out of the Iliad than on any subject not handled before[2]." JOHNSON. "He means that it is

theatre, and afterwards of the Queen's theatre in the Haymarket. He was also a dramatick writer, having produced a comedy entitled "The Quacks, or Love 's the Physician," 1705, and two operas.—MALONE.

[1] See *ante*, v. i. p. 181.—BOSWELL.

[2] My very pleasant friend himself, as well as others who remember old stories, will no doubt be surprised, when I observe, that John Wilkes here shows himself to be of the *Warburtonian school.* It is nevertheless true, as appears from Dr. Hurd the bishop of Worcester's very elegant commentary and notes on the "Epistola ad Pisones." It is necessary, to a fair consideration of the question, that the whole passage in which the words occur should be kept in view:

"Si quid inexpertum scenæ committis, et audes
Personam formare novam, servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.
Difficile est propriè communia dicere: tuque
Rectiùs Iliacum carmen deducis in actus,
Quàm si proferres ignota indictaque primus.
Publica materies privati juris erit, si
Non circa vilem patulumque moraberis orbem,
Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus
Interpres; nec desilies imitator in arctum
Unde pedem proferre pudor vetat aut operis lex."

The "Commentary" thus illustrates it: "But the formation of quite new characters is a work of great difficulty and hazard. For here there is no generally received and fixed archetype to work after, but every one judges of common right according to the extent and comprehension of his own idea; therefore he advises to labour and refit old characters and subjects, particularly those made known and authorized by the practice of Homer and the epic writers." The note is, "*Difficile est propriè communia dicere.*" Lambin's comment is "Communia hoc loco appellat Horatius argumenta fabularum à nullo adhuc tractata: et ita, quæ cuivis exposita sunt et in medio quodammodo posita, quasi vacua et à nemine occupata." And that this is the true meaning of *communia* is evidently fixed by the words *ignota indictaque*, which are explanatory of it; so that the sense given it in the commentary is unquestionably the right one. Yet, notwithstanding the clearness of the case, a late critick has this strange passage: "Difficile quidem esse propriè communia dicere, hoc est, materiem vulgarem, notam et è medio petitam, ita immutare atque exornare, ut nova et scriptori propria videatur,

difficult to appropriate to particular persons qualities which are common to all mankind, as Homer has done"

WILKES. "We have no city-poet now: that is an office which has gone into disuse. The last was Elkanah Settle. There is something in *names* which one cannot help feeling. Now *Elkanah Settle* sounds so *queer*, who can expect much from that name? We should have no hesitation to give it for John Dryden, in preference to Elkanah Settle, from the names only, without knowing their different merits." JOHNSON. "I suppose, sir, Settle did as well for alderman in his time, as John Home could do now. Where did Beckford and Trecothick learn English?"

Mr. Arthur Lee mentioned some Scotch who had taken possession of a barren part of America, and wondered why they should choose it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, all barrenness is comparative. The *Scotch* would not know it to be barren." BOSWELL. "Come, come, he is flattering the English. You have now been in Scotland, sir, and say if you did not see meat and drink enough there." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir; meat and drink enough to give the inhabitants sufficient strength to run away from home." All these quick and lively sallies were said sportively, quite in jest, and with a smile, which showed that he meant only wit. Upon this topick he and Mr. Wilkes could perfectly assimilate; here was a bond of union between them, and I was conscious that as both of them had visited Caledonia, both were fully satisfied of the strange narrow ignorance of those

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altro concedimus; et maximi procul dubio ponderis ista est observatio. Sed omnibus utrinque collatis, et tum difficilis tum venusti, tam judicii quam ingenii ratione habitâ, major videtur esse gloria fabulam formare penitùs novam, quàm veterem, utcunque mutatam de novo exhibere."—*Poet. Præl.* v. ii. p. 164. Where, having first put a wrong construction on the word *communia*, he employs it to introduce an impertinent criticism. For where does the poet prefer the glory of refitting old subjects to that of inventing new ones? The contrary is implied in what he urges about the superior difficulty of the latter, from which he dissuades his countrymen, only in respect of their abilities and inexperience in these matters; and in order to cultivate in them, which is the main view of the epistle, a spirit of correctness, by sending them to the old subjects, treated by the Greek writers. For my own part (with all deference for Dr. Hurd, who thinks the case clear), I consider the passage, "*Difficile est propriè communia dicere*," to be a *crux* for the criticks on Horace. The explication which my Lord of Worcester treats with so much contempt is, nevertheless, countenanced by authority which I find quoted by the learned Baxter in his edition of Horace, "*Difficile est propriè communia dicere*, h. e. res vulgares disertis verbis enarrare, vel humile thema cum dignitate tractare. *Difficile est communes res propriis explicare verbis.* Vet. Schol." I was much disappointed to find that the great critick, Dr. Bentley, has no note upon this very difficult passage, as from his vigorous and illuminated mind I should have expected to receive more satisfaction than I have yet had. Sanadon thus treats of it: "Propriè communia dicere: c'est à dire, qu'il n'est pas aisé de former à ces personnages d'imagination, des caractères particuliers et cependant vraisemblables. Comme l'on a été le maitre de les former tels qu'on a voulu, les fautes que l'on fait en cela sont moins pardonnables. C'est pourquoi Horace conseille de prendre toujours des sujets connus, tels que sont par exemple ceux que l'on peut tirer des poëmes d'Homère." And Dacier observes upon it, "Après avoir marqué les deux qualités qu'il faut donner aux personnages qu'on invente, il conseille aux poëtes tragiques, de n'user pas trop facilement de cette liberté qu'ils ont d'en inventer, car il est très difficile de réussir dans ces nouveaux caractères. Il est mal aisé, dit Horace, de traiter proprement, c'est à dire, convenablement des sujets communs; c'est à dire, des sujets inventés, et qui n'ont aucun fondement ni dans l'histoire ni dans la fable; et il les appelle communs, parcequ'ils sont en disposition à tout le monde, et que tout le monde a le droit de les inventer, et qu'ils sont, comme on dit, au premier occupant." See his observations at large on this expression and the following. After all, I cannot help entertaining some doubt whether the words *Difficile est propriè communia dicere* may not have been thrown in by Horace to form a separate article in a "choice of difficulties" which a poet has to encounter who chooses a new subject; in which case it must be uncertain which of the various explanations is the true one, and every reader has a right to decide as it may strike his own fancy. And even should the words be understood, as they generally are, to be connected both with what goes before and what comes after, the exact sense cannot be absolutely ascertained; for instance, whether *propriè* is meant to signify *in an appropriated manner*, as Dr. Johnson here understands it, or, as it is often used by Cicero, *with propriety* or *elegantly*. In short, it is a rare instance of a defect in perspicuity in an admirable writer, who, with almost every species of excellence, is peculiarly remarkable for that quality. The length of this note perhaps requires an apology. Many of my readers, I doubt not, will admit that a critical discussion of a passage in a favourite classick is very engaging.—BOSWELL. [This passage was the subject of an ingenious discussion between the young Marquis de Sevigné and M. Dacier, which will be found, together with Sanadon's and Dumarsais' opinions, in the last volume of the best edition of Madame de Sevigné's letters. It seems to result from the whole discussion that, in the ordinary meaning of the words, the passage is obscure, and that, to make sense, we must either alter the words, or assign to them an unusual interpretation. All commentators are agreed—by the help of the context—what the general meaning must be, but no one seems able *verbum verbo reddere fidus interpres*.—ED.]

who imagine that it is a land of famine. But they amused themselves with persevering in the old jokes. When I claimed a superiority for Scotland over England in one respect, that no man can be arrested there for a debt merely because another swears it against him; but there must first be the judgment of a court of law ascertaining its justice; and that a seizure of the person, before judgment is obtained, can take place only if his creditor should swear that he is about to fly from the country, or, as it is technically expressed, is *in meditatione fugæ*. WILKES. "That, I should think, may be safely sworn of all the Scotch nation." JOHNSON (to Mr. Wilkes). "You must know, sir, I lately took my friend Boswell, and showed him genuine civilized life in an English provincial town. I turned him loose at Lichfield, my native city, that he might see for once real civility; for you know he lives among savages in Scotland, and among rakes in London." WILKES. "Except when he is with grave, sober, decent people, like you and me." JOHNSON (smiling). "And we ashamed of him."

They were quite frank and easy. Johnson told the story of his asking Mrs. Macaulay to allow her footman to sit down with them, to prove the ridiculousness of the argument for the equality of mankind; and he said to me afterwards, with a nod of satisfaction, "You saw Mr. Wilkes acquiesced." Wilkes talked with all imaginable freedom of the ludicrous title given to the attorney-general, *Diabolus regis;* adding, "I have reason to know something about that officer; for I was prosecuted for a libel." Johnson, who many people would have supposed must have been furiously angry at hearing this talked of so lightly, said not a word. He was now, *indeed*, "a good-humoured fellow."

After dinner we had an accession of Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker lady, well known for her various talents, and of Mr. Alderman Lee[1]. Amidst some patriotick groans, somebody (I think the alderman) said, "Poor old England is lost." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not so much to be lamented that old England is lost, as that the Scotch have found it[2]." WILKES. "Had Lord Bute governed Scotland only, I should not have taken the trouble to write his eulogy, and dedicate 'MORTIMER' to him."

Mr. Wilkes held a candle to show a fine print of a beautiful female figure which hung in the room, and pointed out the elegant contour of the bosom with the finger of an arch connoisseur. He afterwards in a conversation with me waggishly insisted, that all the time Johnson showed visible signs of a fervent admiration of the corresponding charms of the fair Quaker.

This record, though by no means so perfect as I could wish, will serve to give a notion of a very curious interview, which was not only pleasing at the time, but had the agreeable and benignant effect of reconciling any animosity, and sweetening any acidity, which, in the various bustle of political contest, had been produced in the minds of two men, who, though widely different, had so many things in common—classical learning, modern literature, wit and humour, and ready repartee—that it would have been much to be regretted if they had been for ever at a distance from each other.

Mr. Burke gave me much credit for this successful *negotiation;* and pleasantly said, "that there was nothing equal to it in the whole history of the *corps diplomatique*."

I attended Dr. Johnson home, and had the satisfaction to hear him tell Mrs. Williams how much he had been pleased with Mr. Wilkes's company, and what an agreeable day he had passed.

[The following is Dr. Johnson's own good-humoured account to Mrs. Thrale of this meeting. ED.

"For my part I begin to settle, and keep company with *grave aldermen*. I dined yesterday in the Poultry with Mr. Alderman Wilkes, and Mr. Alderman Lee, and Councillor Lee, his brother. There sat you the while thinking, 'What is Johnson doing?' What should he be doing? He is breaking jokes with Jack Wilkes upon the Scotch. Such, madam, are the vicissitudes of things! And there was Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker, that works the sutile pictures[3], who is a great admirer of your conversation."] Letters, vol. i. p. 325.

I talked a good deal to him of the celebrated Margaret Caroline Rudd, whom I had visited, induced by the fame of her talents, address, and irresistible power of fascination[4]. To a lady who disapproved of my visiting her, he said on a former occa-

[1] [It is to this gentleman that allusion is supposed to be made in the following anecdote: "Some one mentioned a gentleman of that party for having behaved oddly on an occasion where faction was not concerned: 'Is he not a citizen of London, a native of North America, and a whig?' said Johnson. 'Let him be absurd, I beg of you: when a monkey is *too* like a man, it shocks one.'" —*Piozzi*, p. 64.—ED.]

[2] It would not become me to expatiate on this strong and pointed remark, in which a very great deal of meaning is condensed.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Mrs. Piozzi had printed this "*futile* pictures." They were copies of pictures in needle work.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 38. Her power of fascination was celebrated, because it was the fashion to suppose that she had fascinated her lover to the gallows.—ED.]

sion, "Nay, madam, Boswell is in the right; I should have visited her myself, were it not that they have now a trick of putting every thing into the newspapers." This evening he exclaimed, "I envy him his acquaintance with Mrs. Rudd."

I mentioned a scheme which I had of making a tour to the Isle of Man, and giving a full account of it; and that Mr. Burke had playfully suggested as a motto,

"The proper study of mankind is MAN."

JOHNSON. "Sir, you will get more by the book than the jaunt will cost you; so you will have your diversion for nothing, and add to your reputation."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"14th May, 1776.

Letters, vol. i. p. 324. "[Boswell] goes away on Thursday very well satisfied with his journey. Some great men[1] have promised to obtain him a place; and then a fig for his father and his new wife[2]."]

On the evening of the next day I took leave of him, being to set out for Scotland. I thanked him, with great warmth, for all his kindness. "Sir," said he, "you are very welcome. Nobody repays it with more."

How very false is the notion that has gone round the world of the rough, and passionate, and harsh manners of this great and good man! That he had occasional sallies of heat of temper, and that he was sometimes, perhaps, too "easily provoked" by absurdity and folly, and sometimes too desirous of triumph in colloquial contest, must be allowed. The quickness both of his perception and sensibility disposed him to sudden explosions of satire; to which his extraordinary readiness of wit was a strong and almost irresistible incitement. To adopt one of the finest images in Mr. Home's "Douglas,"

"————On each glance of thought
Decision followed, as the thunderbolt
Pursues the flash!"———

I admit that the beadle within him was often so eager to apply the lash, that the judge had not time to consider the case with sufficient deliberation.

That he was occasionally remarkable for violence of temper may be granted; but let us ascertain the degree, and not let it be supposed that he was in a perpetual rage, and never without a club in his hand, to knock down every one who approached him. On the contrary, the truth is, that by much the greatest part of his time he was civil, obliging, nay, polite in the true sense of the word; so much so, that many gentlemen who were long acquainted with him never received, or even heard a strong expression from him.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"18th May, 1776.

Letters, vol. i. pp. 330, 334. "[Boswell] went away on Thursday night with no great inclination to travel northward; but who can contend with destiny? He says he had a very pleasant journey. He carries with him two or three good resolutions; I hope they will not mould on the road."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"22d May, 1776.

"On Friday and Saturday I dined with Dr. Taylor, who is in discontent, but resolved not to stay much longer to hear the opinions of lawyers, who are all against him. On Sunday I dined at Sir Joshua's house on the hill [Richmond], with the Bishop of St. Asaph [Shipley]: the dinner was good, and the bishop is knowing and conversible."]

[This praise of Sir Joshua's dinner was not a matter of course; for his table, though very agreeable, was not what is usually called a *good* one, as appears from the following description given of it by Mr. Courtenay (a frequent and favourite guest) to Sir James Mackintosh, and which is not, the editor hopes, misplaced in a work in which Sir Joshua and his society have so considerable a share. ED.

"There was something," said Courtenay, "singular in the style and economy of Sir Joshua's table that contributed to pleasantry and good-humour; a coarse inelegant plenty, without any regard to order and arrangement. A table, prepared for seven or eight, was often compelled to contain fifteen or sixteen. When this pressing difficulty was got over, a deficiency of knives, forks, plates, and glasses succeeded. The attendance was in the same style; and it was absolutely necessary to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that you might be supplied with them before the first course was over. He was once prevailed on to furnish the table with decanters and glasses at dinner, to save time, and prevent the tardy manœuvres of two or three occasional undisciplined domestics. As these acceler-

[1] [This place he never obtained, and the critical reader will observe several passages in this work, the tone of which may be attributed to his disappointment in this point. See *ante*, p. 31. —ED.]

[2] [Lord Auchinleck had lately married Elizabeth Boswell, sister of Claude Irvine Boswell, afterwards a lord of session, by the title of Lord Balmuto. She was the cousin germain of her husband. Of this marriage there was no issue.—ED.]

ating utensils were demolished in the course of service, Sir Joshua could never be persuaded to replace them. But these trifling embarrassments only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment. The wine, cookery, and dishes were but little attended to; nor was the fish or venison ever talked of or recommended. Amidst this convivial, animated bustle among his guests, our host sat perfectly composed; always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drank, but left every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Temporal and spiritual peers, physicians, lawyers, actors, and musicians, composed the motley group, and played their parts without dissonance or discord. At five o'clock precisely dinner was served, whether all the invited guests were arrived or not. Sir Joshua was never so fashionably ill-bred as to wait an hour perhaps for two or three persons of rank or title, and put the rest of the company out of humour by this invidious distinction. His friends and intimate acquaintance will ever love his memory, and will long regret those social hours, and the cheerfulness of that irregular, convivial table, which no one has attempted to revive or imitate, or was indeed qualified to supply "]

["TO HENRY THRALE, ESQ.

"3d June, 1776.

Letters, vol. i. p. 337. "My *Mistress* writes as if she was afraid that I should make too much haste to see her. Pray tell her that there is no danger. The lameness of which I made mention in one of my notes has improved into a very serious and troublesome fit of the gout. I creep about and hang by both hands. I enjoy all the dignity of lameness. I receive ladies and dismiss them sitting. 'Painful pre-eminence!'"]

The following letters concerning an epitaph which he wrote for the monument of Dr. Goldsmith, in Westminster-abbey, afford at once a proof of his unaffected modesty, his carelessness as to his own writings, and of the great respect which he entertained for the taste and judgment of the excellent and eminent person to whom the first and last are addressed:

"DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"16th May, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been kept away from you, I know not well how, and of these vexatious hindrances I know not when there will be an end. I therefore send you the poor dear doctor's epitaph. Read it first yourself; and if you then think it right, show it to the club. I am, you know, willing to be corrected. If you think any thing much amiss, keep it to yourself till we come together. I have sent two copies, but prefer the card. The dates must be settled by Dr. Percy. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["MISS REYNOLDS TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Richmond-hill, 21st June, 1776.

"SIR,—You saw by my last letter that I knew nothing of your illness, and it was unkind of you not to tell me what had been the matter with you, and you should have let me know how Mrs. Thrale and all the family were; but that would have been a sad transgression of the rule you have certainly prescribed to yourself of writing to some sort of people just such a number of lines. Be so good as to favour me with Dr. Goldsmith's epitaph; and if you have no objection I should be very glad to send it to Dr. Beattie. I am writing now to Mrs. Beattie, and can scarce hope she will ever excuse my shameful neglect of writing to her, but by sending her something curious for Dr. Beattie. Reyn. MSS.

"I don't know whether my brother ever mentioned to you what Dr. Beattie said in a letter he received from him the beginning of last month. As I have his letter here, I will transcribe it. 'In my third essay, which treats of the advantages of classical learning, I have said something of Dr. Johnson, which I hope will please him; I ought not to call it a compliment, for it expresses nothing but the real sentiments of my heart. I can never forget the many and great obligations I am under to his genius and to his virtue, and I wish for an opportunity of testifying my gratitude to the world.'

"My brother says he has lost Dr. Goldsmith's epitaph, otherwise I would not trouble you for it. Indeed I should or I ought to have asked if you had any objection to my sending it, before I did send it.—I am, my good sir, your obliged and obedient humble servant,

"FRANCES REYNOLDS.'

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"21st June, 1776.

"DEAREST MADAM,—You are as naughty as you can be. I am willing enough to write to you when you have any thing to say. As for my disorder, as Sir Joshua saw me, I fancied he would tell you, and that I needed not tell you myself.

"Of Dr. Goldsmith's epitaph, I sent Sir Joshua two copies, and had none myself If he has lost it, he has not done well. But I suppose I can recollect it, and will send it to you.—I am, madam, your most humble servant, SAM. JOHNSON.

"P. S.—All the Thrales are well, and Mrs. Thrale has a great regard for Miss Reynolds."]

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"22d June, 1776.

"SIR,—Miss Reynolds has a mind to send the epitaph to Dr. Beattie; I am very willing, but having no copy, cannot immediately recollect it. She tells me you have lost it. Try to recollect, and put down as much as you retain; you perhaps may have kept what I have dropped. The lines for which I am at a loss are something of *rerum civilium sive naturalium*[1]. It was a sorry trick to lose it; help me if you can.

I am, sir, your most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

"The gout grows better, but slowly."

It was, I think, after I had left London in this year, that this epitaph gave occasion to a remonstrance to the *monarch of literature*, for an account of which I am indebted to Sir William Forbes, of Pitsligo.

That my readers may have the subject more fully and clearly before them, I shall insert the epitaph:

"OLIVARII GOLDSMITH,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus
Non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit:
Sive risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens at lenis dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc monumento memoriam coluit
Sodalium amor,
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.
Natus in Hibernià Forniæ Longfordiensis,
In loco cui nomen Pallas,
Nov. XXIX. MDCCXXXI.[2];
Eblanæ literis institutus;
Obiit Londini,
April. IV. MDCCLXXIV."

Sir William Forbes writes to me thus: "I enclose the *Round Robin*. This *jeu d'esprit* took its rise one day at dinner at our friend Sir Joshua Reynolds's. All the company present, except myself, were friends and acquaintance of Dr. Goldsmith. The epitaph written for him by Dr. Johnson became the subject of conversation, and various emendations were suggested, which it was agreed should be submitted to the Doctor's consideration. But the question was, who should have the courage to propose them to him? At last it was hinted, that there could be no way so good as that of a *Round Robin*, as the sailors call it, which they make use of when they enter into a conspiracy, so as not to let it be known who puts his name first or last to the paper. This proposition was instantly assented to; and Dr. Barnard, dean of Derry, now bishop of Killaloe[3], drew up an address to Dr. Johnson on the occasion, replete with wit and humour, but which it was feared the Doctor might think treated the subject with too much levity. Mr. Burke then proposed the address as it stands in the paper in writing, to which I had the honour to officiate as clerk.

"Sir Joshua agreed to carry it to Dr. Johnson, who received it with much good humour[4], and desired Sir Joshua to tell the

[1] [These words must have been in the other copy. They are not in that which was preferred. —ED.]

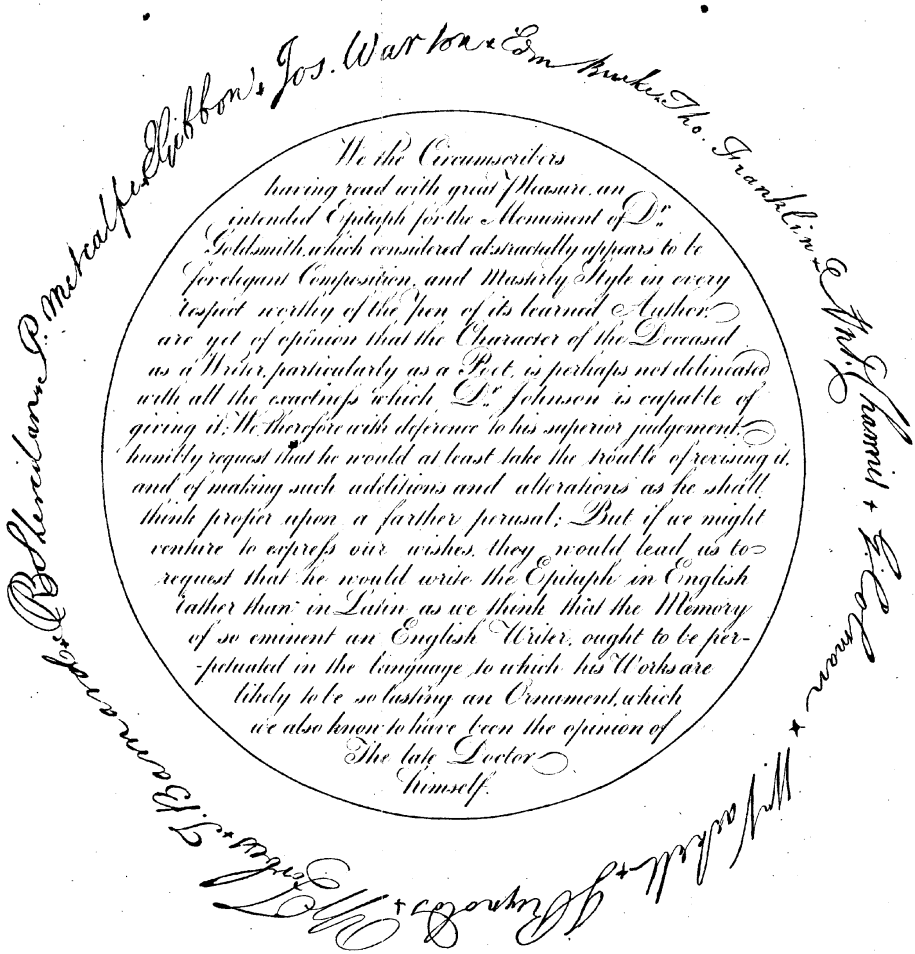
[2] This was a mistake, which was not discovered till after Goldsmith's monument was put up in Westminster Abbey. He was born Nov. 29, 1728; and therefore, when he died he was in his forty-sixth year.—MALONE

[3] This prelate, who was afterwards translated to the see of Limerick, died at Wimbledon in Surrey, June 7, 1806, in his eightieth year. The original *Round Robin* remained in his possession; the paper which Sir William Forbes transmitted to Mr. Boswell being only a copy.—MALONE. [The engraving published by Mr. Boswell was not an exact *fac simile* of the *whole* of this curious paper (which is of the size called *foolscap*, and too large to be folded into an ordinary volume), but of the *signatures* only; and, in later editions, even these have, by successive copying, lost some of their original accuracy. By the favour of the Earl of Balcarras (to whom the paper has descended from his aunt, Lady Anne, the widow of the son of Bishop Barnard) the Editor has been enabled to present his readers with a fresh and more accurate fac simile of the signatures.—ED.]

[4] He, however, upon seeing Dr. Warton's name to the suggestion, that the epitaph should be in English, observed to Sir Joshua, "I wonder that Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, should be such a fool." He said too, "I should have thought Mund Burke would have had more sense." Mr. Langton, who was one of the company a. Sir Joshua's, like a sturdy scholar, resolutely refused to sign the *Round Robin*. This epitaph is engraved upon Dr. Goldsmith's monument without any alteration. At another time, when somebody endeavoured to argue in favour of its being in English, Johnson said, "The language of the country of which a learned man was a native is not the language fit for his epitaph, which should be in ancient and permanent language. Consider, sir, how you should feel, were you to find at Rotterdam an epitaph upon Erasmus *in Dutch!*" For my own part, I think it would be best to have epitaphs written both in a learned language and in the language of the country; so that they might have the advantage of being more universally understood, and at the same time be secured of classical stability. I cannot, however, but be of opinion, that it is not sufficiently discriminative. Applying to Goldsmith equally the epithets of "*Poetæ, Historici, Physici*," is surely not right; for as to his claim to the last of those epithets, I have heard Johnson himself say, "Goldsmith, sir, will give us a very fine book upon the

Round Robin addressed to Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

with Fac Similes of the Signatures.


We the Circumscribers
having read with great Pleasure an
intended Epitaph for the Monument of Dr.
Goldsmith, which considered abstractedly appears to be
for elegant Composition, and Masterly Style in every
respect worthy of the Pen of its learned Author
are yet of opinion that the Character of the Deceased
as a Writer, particularly as a Poet, is perhaps not delineated
with all the exactness which Dr. Johnson is capable of
giving it. We therefore with deference to his superior judgement
humbly request that he would at least take the trouble of revising it,
and of making such additions and alterations as he shall
think proper upon a farther perusal; But if we might
venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to
request that he would write the Epitaph in English
rather than in Latin, as we think that the Memory
of so eminent an English Writer, ought to be per-
-petuated in the language to which his Works are
likely to be so lasting an Ornament, which
we also know to have been the opinion of
The late Doctor
himself.
Jos. Warton
Edm Burke
Tho. Franklin
Fra. Fawkes
Ed. Gibbon
Wm Scott
Sam. Rogers
Chas Burney
Rob. Orme
Rob. Chambers
Rd. Warton
P. Metcalfe
Gilbert Elliot

gentlemen, that he would alter the epitaph in any manner they pleased, as to the sense of it, but *he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey, with an English inscription*[1].

"I consider this *Round Robin* as a species of literary curiosity worth preserving, as it marks, in a certain degree, Dr. Johnson's character."

My readers are presented with a faithful transcript of a paper, which I doubt not of their being desirous to see.

E. Gibbon. Jos. Warton. Edm. Burke.

Thos. Franklin[3]. Ant. Chamier[4]. Geo. Colman. T. Barnard. R. B. Sheridan. P. Metcalfe[2]

"We the Circumscribers, having read with great pleasure an intended epitaph for the monument of Dr. Goldsmith; which, considered abstractedly, appears to be, for elegant composition, and masterly style, in every respect worthy of the pen of its learned author; are yet of opinion, that the character of the deceased as a writer, particularly as a poet, is, perhaps, not delineated with all the exactness which Dr. Johnson is capable of giving it. We, therefore, with deference to his superior judgment, humbly request that he would, at least, take the trouble of revising it; and of making such additions and alterations as he shall think proper on a further perusal. But if we might venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to request that he would write the epitaph in English, rather than in Latin; as we think the memory of so eminent an English writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his works are likely to be so lasting an ornament, which we also know to have been the opinion of the late doctor himself."

W. Forbes. J. Reynolds. William Vachell[5].]

Sir William Forbes's observation is very just. The anecdote now related proves, in the strongest manner, the reverence and awe with which Johnson was regarded, by some of the most eminent men of his time in various departments, and even by such of them as lived most with him; while it also confirms what I have again and again inculcated, that he was by no means of that ferocious and irascible character which has been ignorantly imagined[6].

This hasty composition is also to be remarked as one of the thousand instances which evince the extraordinary promptitude of Mr. Burke; who, while he is equal to the greatest things, can adorn the least; can, with equal facility, embrace the vast and complicated speculations of politicks or the ingenious topicks of literary investigation[7].

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. BOSWELL.

"16th May, 1776.

"MADAM,—You must not think me uncivil in omitting to answer the letter with which you favoured me some time ago. I imagined it to have been written without Mr. Boswell's knowledge, and therefore supposed the answer to require, what I could not find, a private conveyance.

"The difference with Lord Auchinleck is now over; and since young Alexander has appeared, I hope no more difficulties will arise among you; for I sincerely wish you all happy. Do not teach the young ones to dislike me, as you dislike me yourself; but let me at least have Veronica's kindness, because she is my acquaintance.

"You will now have Mr. Boswell home, it is well that you have him; he has led a wild life I have taken him to Lichfield, and he has followed Mr. Thrale to Bath Pray take care of him, and tame him. The only thing in which I have the honour to agree with you is, in loving him; and while we are so much of a mind in a matter of so much importance, our other quarrels will, I hope, produce no great bitterness. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 25th June, 1776

"You have formerly complained that my letters were too long. There is no danger of that complaint being made at present; for I find it difficult for me to write to you at all. [Here an account of having been afflicted with a return of melancholy or bad spirits.]

"The boxes of books[8] which you sent

subject; but if he can distinguish a cow from a horse, that, I believe, may be the extent of his knowledge of natural history." His book is, indeed, an excellent performance, though in some instances he appears to have trusted too much to Buffon, who, with all his theoretical ingenuity and extraordinary eloquence, I suspect had little actual information in the science on which he wrote so admirably. For instance, he tells us that the *cow* sheds her horns every two years; a most palpable errour, which Goldsmith has faithfully transferred into his book. It is wonderful that Buffon, who lived so much in the country, at his noble seat, should have fallen into such a blunder. I suppose he has confounded the *cow* with the *deer*.—BOSWELL.

[1] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 373, on the subject of English inscriptions to English writers.—ED.]

[2] [See *post*, sub 3d Oct. 1782.—ED.]

[3] [There would be no doubt that this was Thomas Franklin, D.D. the translator of Sophocles and Lucian, but that the Biog. Dict. and indeed the Doctor's own title-pages, spell his name *Francklin*. See *post*, sub 1780, *ad finem*. He died in 1784, æt. 63.—ED.]

[4] [Anthony Chamier, Esq. one of the club, M. P. for Tamworth, and Under-Secretary of State from 1775 till his death, 12th Oct. 1780.—ED.]

[5] [All that the editor has been able to discover of this gentleman is that he was a friend of Sir Joshua's, and attended his funeral.—ED.]

[6] [Most readers would draw a directly contrary conclusion.—ED.]

[7] Besides this Latin epitaph, Johnson honoured the memory of his friend Goldsmith with a short one in Greek.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, v. i. p. 478.—ED.]

[8] Upon a settlement of our account of expenses

to me are arrived; but I have not yet examined the contents. * * * *

"I send you Mr. Maclaurin's paper for the negro who claims his freedom in the court of session."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. BOSWELL.

"2d July, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—These black fits, of which you complain, perhaps hurt your memory as well as your imagination. When did I complain that your letters were too long[1]? Your last letter, after a very long delay, brought very bad news. [Here a series of reflections upon melancholy, and—what I could not help thinking strangely unreasonable in him who had suffered so much from it himself—a good deal of severity and reproof, as if it were owing to my own fault, or that I was, perhaps, affecting it from a desire of distinction.]

"Read Cheyne's 'English Malady;' but do not let him teach you a foolish notion that melancholy is a proof of acuteness.

* * * * *

"To hear that you have not opened your boxes of books is very offensive. The examination and arrangement of so many volumes might have afforded you an amusement very seasonable at present, and useful for the whole of life. I am, I confess, very angry that you manage yourself so ill. * *

"I do not now say any more, than that I am, with great kindness and sincerity, dear sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"It was last year determined by Lord Mansfield in the court of king's bench, that a negro cannot be taken out of the kingdom without his own consent."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. BOSWELL.

"16th July, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I make haste to write again, lest my last letter should give you too much pain. If you are really oppressed with overpowering and involuntary melancholy, you are to be pitied rather than reproached. * * * *

"Now, my dear Bozzy, let us have done with quarrels and with censure. Let me know whether I have not sent you a pretty library. There are, perhaps, many books among them which you never need read through; but there are none which it is not proper for you to know, and sometimes to consult. Of these books, of which the use is only occasional, it is often sufficient to know the contents, that, when any question arises, you may know where to look for information.

"Since I wrote, I have looked over Mr Maclaurin's plea, and think it excellent. How is the suit carried on? If by subscription, I commission you to contribute, in my name, what is proper. Let nothing be wanting in such a case. Dr. Drummond[2] I see, is superseded. His father would have grieved: but he lived to obtain the pleasure of his son's election, and died before that pleasure was abated.

"Langton's lady has brought him a girl, and both are well: I dined with him the other day. * * * *

"It vexes me to tell you, that on the evening of the 29th of May I was seized by the gout, and am not quite well. The pain has not been violent, but the weakness and tenderness were very troublesome; and what is said to be very uncommon, it has not alleviated my other disorders. Make use of youth and health while you have them; make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell. I am, my dear sir, your most affectionate

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON

"Edinburgh, 18th July, 1776.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 2d of this month was rather a harsh medicine; but I was delighted with that spontaneous tenderness, which, a few days afterwards, sent forth such balsam as your next brought me. I found myself for some time so ill that all I could do was to preserve a decent appearance, while all within was weakness and distress. Like a reduced garrison that has some spirit left, I hung out flags, and planted all the force I could muster, upon the walls. I am now much better, and I sincerely thank you for your kind attention and friendly counsel.

* * * * * *

"Count Manucci[3] came here last week from travelling in Ireland. I have shown him what civilities I could on his account, on yours, and on that of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. He has had a fall from his horse, and been much hurt. I regret this unlucky

on a tour to the Hebrides, there was a balance due to me, which Dr. Johnson chose to discharge by sending books.—BOSWELL.

[1] Baretti told me that Johnson complained of my writing very long letters to him when I was upon the continent; which was most certainly true; but it seems my friend did not remember it. —BOSWELL.

[2] The son of Johnson's old friend, Mr. William Drummond. (See *ante*, v. i. p. 235, and 459.) He was a young man of such distinguished merit, that he was nominated to one of the medical professorships in the college of Edinburgh, without solicitation, while he was at Naples. Having other views, he did not accept of the honour, and soon afterwards died.—BOSWELL.

[3] A Florentine nobleman, mentioned by Johnson in his "Notes of his Tour in France." I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with him in London, in the spring of this year.—BOSWELL.

accident, for he seems to be a very amiable man."

As the evidence of what I have mentioned at the beginning of this year, I select from his private register the following passage:

"July 25, 1776. O God, who hast ordained that whatever is to be desired should be sought by labour, and who, by thy blessing, bringest honest labour to good effect, look with mercy upon my studies and endeavours. Grant me, O Lord, to design only what is lawful and right; and afford me calmness of mind, and steadiness of purpose, that I may so do thy will in this short life, as to obtain happiness in the world to come, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

It appears from a note subjoined, that this was composed when he "purposed to apply vigorously to study, particularly of the Greek and Italian tongues."

Such a purpose, so expressed, at the age of sixty-seven, is admirable and encouraging; and it must impress all the thinking part of my readers with a consolatory confidence in habitual devotion, when they see a man of such enlarged intellectual powers as Johnson, thus in the genuine earnestness of secrecy, imploring the aid of that Supreme Being, "from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"3d Aug. 1776.

"SIR,—A young man, whose name is Paterson, offers himself this evening to the Academy. He is the son of a man[1] for whom I have long had a kindness, and is now abroad in distress. I shall be glad that you will be pleased to show him any little countenance, or pay him any small distinction. How much it is in your power to favour or to forward a young man I do not know; nor do I know how much this candidate deserves favour by his personal merit, or what hopes his proficiency may now give of future eminence. I recommend him as the son of my friend. Your character and station enable you to give a young man great encouragement by very easy means. You have heard of a man who asked no other favour of Sir Robert Walpole, than that he would bow to him at his levee.—I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, Aug. 30, 1776.

(After giving him an account of my having examined the chests of books which he had sent to me, and which contained what may be truly called a numerous and miscellaneous *stall library*, thrown together at random:—)

"Lord Hailes was against the decree in the case of my client, the minister; not that he justified the minister, but because the parishioner both provoked and retorted. I sent his lordship your able argument upon the case for his perusal. His observation upon it in a letter to me was, 'Dr. Johnson's *Suasorium* is pleasantly[2] and artfully composed. I suspect, however, that he has not convinced himself; for I believe that he is better read in ecclesiastical history, than to imagine that a bishop or a presbyter has a right to begin censure or discipline *è cathedrâ*[3].'

* * * * * *

"For the honour of Count Manucci, as well as to observe that exactness of truth which you have taught me, I must correct what I said in a former letter. He did not fall from his horse, which might have been an imputation on his skill as an officer of cavalry: his horse fell with him.

"I have, since I saw you, read every word of 'Granger's Biographical History.' It has entertained me exceedingly, and I do not think him the *whig* that you supposed. Horace Walpole's being his patron is, indeed, no good sign of his political principles. But he denied to Lord Mountstuart that he was a whig, and said he had been accused by both parties of partiality. It seems he was like Pope,—

'While tories call me whig, and whigs a tory.'

I wish you would look more into his book; and as Lord Mountstuart wishes much to find a proper person to continue the work upon Granger's plan, and has desired I would mention it to you, if such a man occurs, please to let me know. His lordship will give him generous encouragement[4]."

"TO MR. ROBERT LEVETT.

"Brighthelmstone, 21st Oct. 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—Having spent about six weeks at this place, we have at length re-

[1] Samuel Paterson, formerly a bookseller, latterly an auctioneer, and well known for his skill in forming catalogues of books. He died in London, Oct. 29, 1802.—MALONE. [See *ante*, v i. p. 292.—ED.]

[2] Why his lordship uses the epithet *pleasantly*, when speaking of a grave piece of reasoning, I cannot conceive. But different men have different notions of pleasantry. I happened to sit by a gentleman one evening at the Opera-house in London, who, at the moment when *Medea* appeared to be in great agony at the thought of killing her children, turned to me with a smile, and said "*Funny* enough."—BOSWELL.

[3] Dr. Johnson afterwards told me, that he was of opinion that a clergyman had this right.—BOSWELL.

[4] [Lord Mountstuart, afterwards first Marquis of Bute, had also patronised, in a similar manner, Sir John Hill's immense "Vegetable System" (twenty-six vols. folio!); but Sir John's widow

solved on returning. I expect to see you all in Fleet-street on the 30th of this month.

"I did not go into the sea till last Friday[1], but think to go most of this week, though I know not that it does me any good. My nights are very restless and tiresome, but I am otherwise well.

"I have written word of my coming to Mrs. Williams. Remember me kindly to Francis and Betsey[2]. I am, sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON[3]."

I again wrote to Dr. Johnson on the 21st of Oct., informing him, that my father had, in the most liberal manner, paid a large debt for me, and that I had now the happiness of being upon very good terms with him; to which he returned the following answer:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Bolt-court, 16th Nov. 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I had great pleasure in hearing that you are at last on good terms with your father. Cultivate his kindness by all honest and manly means. Life is but short: no time can be afforded but for the indulgence of real sorrow, or contests upon questions seriously momentous. Let us not throw away any of our days upon useless resentment, or contend who shall hold out longest in stubborn malignity. It is best not to be angry; and best, in the next place, to be quickly reconciled. May you and your father pass the remainder of your time in reciprocal benevolence!

* * * * * *

"Do you ever hear from Mr. Langton? I visit him sometimes, but he does not talk. I do not like his scheme of life; but as I am not permitted to understand it, I cannot set any thing right that is wrong. His children are sweet babies.

"I hope my irreconcileable enemy, Mrs. Boswell, is well. Desire her not to transmit her malevolence to the young people. Let me have Alexander, and Veronica, and Euphemia, for my friends.

"Mrs. Williams, whom you may reckon as one of your well-wishers, is in a feeble and languishing state, with little hopes of growing better. She went for some part of the autumn into the country, but is little benefited; and Dr. Lawrence confesses that his art is at an end. Death is, however, at a distance: and what more than that can we say of ourselves? I am sorry for her pain, and more sorry for her decay. Mr Levett is sound, wind and limb.

"I was some weeks this autumn at Brighthelmstone. The place was very dull, and I was not well: the expedition to the Hebrides was the most pleasant journey that I ever made. Such an effort annually would give the world a little diversification.

"Every year, however, we cannot wander, and must therefore endeavour to spend our time at home as well as we can. I believe it is best to throw life into a method, that every hour may bring its employment, and every employment have its hour. Xenophon observes, in his 'Treatise of Œconomy,' that if every thing be kept in a certain place, when any thing is worn out or consumed, the vacuity which it leaves will show what is wanting; so if every part of time has its duty, the hour will call into remembrance its proper engagement.

"I have not practised all this prudence myself, but I have suffered much for want of it; and I would have you, by timely recollection and steady resolution, escape from those evils which have lain heavy upon me.—I am, my dearest Boswell, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

On the 16th of November, I informed him that Mr. Strahan had sent me *twelve* copies of the "Journey to the Western Islands," handsomely bound, instead of the *twenty* copies which were stipulated, but which, I supposed, were to be only in sheets; requested to know how they should be distributed; and mentioned that I had another son born to me, who was named David, and was a sickly infant.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"21st Dec. 1776.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been for some time ill of a cold, which, perhaps, I made an excuse to myself for not writing, when in reality I know not what to say.

"The books you must at last distribute as you think best, in my name, or your own, as you are inclined, or as you judge most proper. Every body cannot be obliged; but I wish that nobody may be offended. Do the best you can.

"I congratulate you on the increase of your

published, in 1788, "An Address to the Public," in which she alleged that Lord Bute had acted very penuriously in that matter.—ED.]

[1] [Johnson was a good swimmer. "One of the bathing-men at Brighton seeing him swim, said, 'Why, sir, you must have been a stout-hearted gentleman forty years ago.'"—*Piozzi*, p. 87.—ED.]

[2] His female servant.—MALONE.

[3] For this and Dr. Johnson's other letters to Mr. Levett, I am indebted to my old acquaintance Mr. Nathaniel Thomas, whose worth and ingenuity have been long known to a respectable though not a wide circle, and whose collection of medals would do credit to persons of greater opulence.—BOSWELL. Mr. Nathaniel Thomas, who was many years editor of the "St. James's Chronicle," died March 1, 1795.—MALONE

family, and hope that little David is by this time well, and his mamma perfectly recovered. I am much pleased to hear of the re-establishment of kindness between you and your father. Cultivate his paternal tenderness as much as you can. To live at variance at all is uncomfortable; and variance with a father is still more uncomfortable. Besides that, in the whole dispute you have the wrong side; at least you gave the first provocations, and some of them very offensive. Let it now be all over. As you have no reason to think that your new mother has shown you any foul play, treat her with respect, and with some degree of confidence; this will secure your father. When once a discordant family has felt the pleasure of peace they will not willingly lose it. If Mrs. Boswell would but be friends with me, we might now shut the temple of Janus.

"What came of Dr. Memis's cause? Is the question about the negro determined? Has Sir Allan any reasonable hopes? What is become of poor Macquarry? Let me know the event of all these litigations. I wish particularly well to the negro and Sir Allan.

"Mrs. Williams has been much out of order; and though she is something better, is likely, in her physician's opinion, to endure her malady for life, though she may, perhaps, die of some other. Mrs. Thrale is big, and fancies that she carries a boy: if it were very reasonable to wish much about it, I should wish her not to be disappointed. The desire of male heirs is not appendant only to feudal tenures. A son is almost necessary to the continuance of Thrale's fortune; for what can misses do with a brew-house? Lands are fitter for daughters than trades.

"Baretti went away from Thrale's in some whimsical fit of disgust, or ill-nature, without taking any leave. It is well if he finds in any other place as good an habitation, and as many conveniences. He has got five-and-twenty guineas by translating Sir Joshua's Discourses into Italian, and Mr. Thrale gave him an hundred in the spring; so that he is yet in no difficulties.

"Colman has bought Foote's patent, and is to allow Foote for life sixteen hundred pounds a year, as Reynolds told me, and to allow him to play so often on such terms that he may gain four hundred pounds more. What Colman can get by this bargain [1], but trouble and hazard, I do not see.—I am, dear sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] It turned out, however, a very fortunate bargain; for Foote, though not then fifty-six, died at an inn in Dover, in less than a year, October 21st, 1777.—MALONE.

The Reverend Dr. Hugh Blair, who had long been admired as a preacher at Edinburgh, thought now of diffusing his excellent sermons more extensively, and increasing his reputation, by publishing a collection of them. He transmitted the manuscript to Mr. Strahan, the printer, who, after keeping it for some time, wrote a letter to him, discouraging the publication. Such at first was the unpropitious state of one of the most successful theological books that has ever appeared. Mr. Strahan, however, had sent one of the sermons to Dr. Johnson for his opinion: and after his unfavourable letter to Dr. Blair had been sent off, he received from Johnson, on Christmas-eve, a note in which was the following paragraph:

"I have read over Dr. Blair's first sermon with more than approbation: to say it is good, is to say too little."

I believe Mr. Strahan had very soon after this time a conversation with Dr. Johnson concerning them; and then he very candidly wrote again to Dr. Blair, enclosing Johnson's note, and agreeing to purchase the volume, for which he and Mr. Cadell gave one hundred pounds. The sale was so rapid and extensive, and the approbation of the public so high, that, to their honour be it recorded, the proprietors made Dr. Blair a present first of one sum, and afterwards of another, of fifty pounds, thus voluntarily doubling the stipulated price; and, when he prepared another volume, they gave him at once three hundred pounds, being in all five hundred pounds, by an agreement to which I am a subscribing witness; and now for a third octavo volume he has received no less than six hundred pounds.

In 1777 [he began the year with a serious indisposition. The following letter affords a strong proof of his anxiety for society, and the effort he would make, even over disease, to enjoy it.] ED.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Wednesday, 15th January, 1 in the morning, 1777.

"*Omnium rerum vicissitudo!* The night after last Thursday was so bad that I took ipecacuanha the next day. The next night was no better. On Saturday I dined with Sir Joshua. The night was such as I was forced to rise and pass some hours in a chair, with great labour of respiration. I found it now time to do something, and went to Dr. Lawrence, and told him I would do what he should order, without reading the prescription. He sent for a chirurgeon, and took about twelve ounces of blood, and in the afternoon I got sleep in a chair. Lett. v. i. p 343.

"At night, when I came to lie down, after trial of an hour or two, I found sleep

impracticable, and therefore did what the doctor permitted in a case of distress; I rose, and opening the orifice, let out about ten ounces more. Frank and I were but awkward; but, with Mr. Levett's help, we stopped the stream, and I lay down again, though to little purpose; the difficulty of breathing allowed no rest. I slept again in the daytime, in an erect posture. The doctor has ordered me a second bleeding, which I hope will set my breath at liberty. Last night I could lie but a little at a time.

"Yet I do not make it a matter of much form. I was to-day at Mrs. Gardiner's. When I have bled to-morrow, I will not give up Langton nor Paradise. But I beg that you will fetch me away on Friday. I do not know but clearer air may do me good; but whether the air be clear or dark let me come to you.—I am, &c.

"'To sleep, or not to sleep—.'"]

It appears from his "Prayers and Meditations," that Johnson suffered much from a state of mind "unsettled and perplexed," and from that constitutional gloom, which, together with his extreme humility and anxiety with regard to his religious state, made him contemplate himself through too dark and unfavourable a medium. It may be said of him, that he "saw God in clouds." Certain we may be of his injustice to himself in the following lamentable paragraph, which it is painful to think came from the contrite heart of this great man, to whose labours the world is so much indebted:

"When I survey my past life, I discover nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of the mind very near to madness, which I hope He that made me will suffer to extenuate many faults, and excuse many deficiencies."

But we find his devotions in this year eminently fervent; and we are comforted by observing intervals of quiet, composure, and gladness.

On Easter-day we find the following emphatick prayer:

"Almighty and most merciful Father, who seest all our miseries, and knowest all our necessities, look down upon me and pity me. Defend me from the violent incursion of evil thoughts, and enable me to form and keep such resolutions as may conduce to the discharge of the duties which thy providence shall appoint me; and so help me, by thy Holy Spirit, that my heart may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found, and that I may serve thee with pure affection and a cheerful mind. Have mercy upon me, O God, have mercy upon me! Years and infirmities oppress me; terrour and anxiety beset me. Have mercy upon me, my Creator and my Judge! [In all dangers protect me[1];] in all perplexities relieve and free me; and so help me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may now so commemorate the death of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, as that, when this short and painful life shall have an end, I may, for his sake, be received to everlasting happiness. Amen."

While he was at church, the agreeable impressions upon his mind are thus commemorated:

"On Easter-day I was at church early, and there prayed over my prayer, and commended Tetty and my other friends. I was for some time much distressed, but at last obtained, I hope, from the God of Peace, more quiet than I have enjoyed for a long time. I had made no resolution, but as my heart grew lighter, my hopes revived, and my courage increased; and I wrote with my pencil in my Common Prayer Book,

Vita ordinanda.
Biblia legenda.
Theologiæ opera danda.
Serviendum et lætandum.

"I then went to the altar, having, I believe, again read my prayer. I then went to the table and communicated, praying for some time afterwards, but the particular matter of my prayer I do not remember.

"I dined, by an appointment, with Mrs Gardiner, and passed the afternoon with such calm gladness of mind as it is very long since I felt before. I came home, and began to read the Bible. I passed the night in such sweet uninterrupted sleep as I have not known since I slept at Fort Augustus.

"On Monday I dined with Sheward, on Tuesday with Paradise. The mornings have been devoured by company, and one intrusion has, through the whole week, succeeded to another.

"At the beginning of the year I proposed to myself a scheme of life, and a plan of study; but neither life has been rectified, nor study followed. Days and months pass in a dream; and I am afraid that my memory grows less tenacious, and my observation less attentive. If I am decaying, it is time to make haste. My nights are restless and tedious, and my days drowsy. The flatulence which torments me has sometimes so obstructed my breath, that the act of respiration became not only voluntary but laborious in a decumbent posture. By copious bleeding I was relieved, but not cured.

"I have this year omitted church on most Sundays, intending to supply the deficience in the week. So that I owe twelve

[1] [These words are in the original.—HALL.]

attendances on worship. I will make no more such superstitious stipulations, which entangle the mind with unbidden obligations."

Piozzi, p. 126, 127. [It was about this time [1] that Mrs. Thrale, who had just recovered from illness and confinement, went into his room in the morning of her birthday, and said to him, "Nobody sends me any verses now, because I am five-and-thirty years old; and Stella was fed with them till forty-six, I remember." Upon which he burst out suddenly, without the least previous hesitation, and without having entertained the smallest intention towards it half a minute before:—

Oft in danger, yet alive,
We are come to thirty-five;
Long may better years arrive,
Better years than thirty-five.
Could philosophers contrive
Life to stop at thirty-five,
Time his hours should never drive
O'er the bounds of thirty-five.
High to soar, and deep to dive,
Nature gives at thirty-five.
Ladies, stock and tend your hive,
Trifle not at thirty-five:
For, howe'er we boast and strive,
Life declines from thirty-five:
He that ever hopes to thrive
Must begin by thirty-five;
And all who wisely wish to wive
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

"And now," said he, as I was writing them down, "you may see what it is to come for poetry to a Dictionary-maker; you may observe that the rhymes run in alphabetical order exactly." And so they do. Dr. Johnson did indeed possess an almost Tuscan power of improvisation.] [He

Hawk. Apoph. p. 205. was much pleased with the Italian *improvisatore*, whom he saw at Streatham, and with whom he talked much in Latin. He told him, if he had not been a witness to his faculty himself, he should not have thought it possible. He said, Isaac Hawkins Browne had endeavoured at it in English, but could not get beyond thirty verses.]

Mr. Steevens, whose generosity is well known, joined Dr. Johnson in kind assistance to a female relation of Dr. Goldsmith, and desired that on her return to Ireland she would procure authentick particulars of the life of her celebrated relation. Concerning her is the following letter:

"TO GEORGE STEEVENS, ESQ.
"25th February, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—You will be glad to hear that from Mrs. Goldsmith, whom we lamented as drowned, I have received a letter full of gratitude to us all, with promise to make the inquiries which we recommended to her.

"I would have had the honour of conveying this intelligence to Miss Caulfield, but that her letter is not at hand, and I know not the direction. You will tell the good news.—I am, sir, your most, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON"

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.
"Edinburgh, 14th February, 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—My state of epistolary accounts with you at present is extraordinary. The balance, as to number, is on your side. I am indebted to you for two letters: one dated the 16th of November, upon which very day I wrote to you, so that our letters were exactly exchanged; and one dated the 21st of December last.

"My heart was warmed with gratitude by the truly kind contents of both of them; and it is amazing and vexing that I have allowed so much time to elapse without writing to you. But delay is inherent in me, by nature or by bad habit. I waited till I should have an opportunity of paying you my compliments on a new year. I have procrastinated till the year is no longer new.

* * * * *

"Dr. Memis's cause was determined against him, with 40*l.* costs. The lord president, and two other of the judges, dissented from the majority upon this ground: that although there may have been no intention to injure him by calling him *doctor of medicine*, instead of *physician*, yet, as he remonstrated against the designation before the charter was printed off, and represented that it was disagreeable, and even hurtful to him, it was ill-natured to refuse to alter it, and let him have the designation to which he was certainly entitled. My own opinion is, that our court has judged wrong. The defendants were *in malâ fide*, to persist in naming him in a way that he disliked. You remember poor Goldsmith, when he grew important, and wished to appear *Doctor Major* [1] could not bear your calling him *Goldy*. Would it not have been wrong to have named him so in your 'Preface to Shakspeare,' or in any serious permanent writing of any sort? The difficulty is, whether an action should be allowed on such petty wrongs. *De minimis non curat lex.*

"The negro cause is not yet decided. A memorial is preparing on the side of slavery, I shall send you a copy as soon as it is printed. Maclaurin is made happy by your approbation of his memorial for the black.

"Macquarry was here in the winter, and

[1] [The editor doubts whether this extract should not be placed under the year 1779. See *post*, Sept. 9th, 1779, note.—ED.]

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 353.—ED.]

we passed an evening together. The sale of his estate cannot be prevented.

"Sir Allan Maclean's suit against the Duke of Argyle, for recovering the ancient inheritance of his family, is now fairly before all our judges. I spoke for him yesterday, and Maclaurin to-day; Crosbie spoke to-day against him. Three more counsel are to be heard, and next week the cause will be determined. I send you the informations, or cases, on each side, which I hope you will read. You said to me when we were under Sir Allan's hospitable roof, 'I will help you with my pen.' You said it with a generous glow; and though his Grace of Argyle did afterwards mount you upon an excellent horse, upon which 'you looked like a bishop,' you must not swerve from your purpose at Inchkenneth. I wish you may understand the points at issue, amidst our Scotch law principles and phrases."

Here followed a full state of the case, in which I endeavoured to make it as clear as I could to an Englishman who had no knowledge of the formularies and technical language of the law of Scotland.

"I shall inform you how the cause is decided here. But as it may be brought under the review of our judges, and is certainly to be carried by appeal to the house of lords, the assistance of such a mind as yours will be of consequence. Your paper on *Vicious Intromission* is a noble proof of what you can do even in Scotch law.

* * * * * *

"I have not yet distributed all your books. Lord Hailes and Lord Monboddo have each received one, and return you thanks. Monboddo dined with me lately, and having drank tea, we were a good while by ourselves; and as I knew that he had read the 'Journey' superficially, as he did not talk of it as I wished, I brought it to him, and read aloud several passages; and then he talked so, that I told him he was to have a copy *from the authour*. He begged *that* might be marked on it. * * * * *

"I ever am, my dear sir, your most faithful and affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

"SIR ALEXANDER DICK TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Prestonfield, 17th February, 1777.

"SIR,—I had yesterday the honour of receiving your book of your 'Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland,' which you was so good as to send me, by the hands of our mutual friend, Mr. Boswell, of Auchinleck; for which I return you my most hearty thanks; and, after carefully reading it over again, shall deposit it in my little collection of choice books, next our worthy friend's 'Journey to Corsica.' As there are many things to admire in both performances, I have often wished that no travels or journey should be published but those undertaken by persons of integrity, and capacity to judge well and describe faithfully, and in good language, the situation, condition, and manners of the countries passed through. Indeed, our country of Scotland, in spite of the union of the crowns, is still in most places so devoid of clothing or cover from hedges and plantations, that it was well you gave your readers a sound *monitoire* with respect to that circumstance The truths you have told, and the purity of the language in which they are expressed, as your 'Journey' is universally read, may, and already appear to have a very good effect. For a man of my acquaintance, who has the largest nursery for trees and hedges in this country, tells me, that of late the demand upon him for these articles is doubled, and sometimes tripled. I have, therefore, listed Dr. Samuel Johnson in some of my memorandums of the principal planters and favourers of the enclosures, under a name which I took the liberty to invent from the Greek *Papadendrion* Lord Auchinleck and some few more are of the list. I am told that one gentleman in the shire of Aberdeen, *viz.* Sir Archibald Grant, has planted above fifty millions of trees on a piece of very wild ground at Monimusk: I must inquire if he has fenced them well, before he enters my list; for that is the soul of enclosing. I began myself to plant a little, our ground being too valuable for much, and that is now fifty years ago; and the trees, now in my seventy-fourth year, I look up to with reverence, and show them to my eldest son, now in his fifteenth year; and they are the full height of my country-house here, where I had the pleasure of receiving you, and hope again to have that satisfaction with our mutual friend, Mr. Boswell. I shall always continue, with the truest esteem, dear Doctor, your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

"ALEXANDER DICK [1]."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"18th February, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—It is so long since I heard any thing from you [2], that I am not easy about it; write something to me next post. When you sent your last letter, every thing seemed to be mending; I hope nothing has

[1] For a character of this very amiable man, see *ante*, vol. i. p. 336, and the *Biographical Dictionary*. He died in 1785.—BOSWELL.

[2] By the then course of the post, my long letter of the 14th had not yet reached him.—BOSWELL.

ately grown worse. I suppose young Alexander continues to thrive, and Veronica is now very pretty company. I do not suppose the lady is yet reconciled to me; yet let her know that I love her very well, and value her very much.

"Dr Blair is printing some sermons. If they are all like the first, which I have read, they are *sermones aurei, ac auro magis aurei*. It is excellently written, both as to doctrine and language. Mr. Watson's book[1] seems to be much esteemed.

* * * * * *

"Poor Beauclerk still continues very ill. Langton lives on as he used to do. His children are very pretty, and, I think, his lady loses her Scotch[2]. Paoli I never see.

"I have been so distressed by difficulty of breathing, that I lost, as was computed, six-and-thirty ounces of blood in a few days. I am better, but not well.

"I wish you would be vigilant and get me Graham's 'Telemachus,' that was printed at Glasgow, a very little book; and '*Johnstoni Poemata*[3],' another little book, printed at Middleburgh.

"Mrs. Williams sends her compliments, and promises that when you come hither she will accommodate you as well as ever she can in the old room. She wishes to know whether you sent her book to Sir Alexander Gordon.

"My dear Boswell, do not neglect to write to me; for your kindness is one of the pleasures of my life, which I should be sorry to lose. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.
"Edinburgh, 24th February, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—Your letter dated the 18th instant, I had the pleasure to receive last post. Although my late long neglect, or rather delay, was truly culpable, I am tempted not to regret it, since it has produced me so valuable a proof of your regard. I did, indeed, during that inexcusable silence, sometimes divert the reproaches of my own mind, by fancying that I should hear again from you, inquiring with some anxiety about me, because, for aught you knew, I might have been ill.

"You are pleased to show me that my kindness is of some consequence to you. My heart is elated at the thought. Be assured, my dear sir, that my affection and reverence for you are exalted and steady. I do not believe that a more perfect attachment ever existed in the history of mankind. And it is a noble attachment, for the attractions are genius, learning, and piety.

"Your difficulty of breathing alarms me, and brings into my imagination an event, which, although, in the natural course of things, I must expect at some period, I cannot view with composure.

* * * * * *

"My wife is much honoured by what you say of her. She begs you may accept of her best compliments. She is to send you some marmalade of oranges of her own making.

* * * * * *

"I ever am, my dear sir, your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. ASTON
"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 8th March, 177

"DEAR MADAM,—As we pass on through the journey of life, we meet, and ought to expect, many unpleasing occurrences, but many likewise encounter us unexpected. I have this morning heard from Lucy of your illness. I heard indeed in the next sentence that you are to a great degree recovered. May your recovery, dearest madam, be complete and lasting! The hopes of paying you the annual visit is one of the few solaces with which my imagination gratifies me, and my wish is, that I may find you happy. Pemb. MS.

"My health is much broken; my nights are very restless, and will not be made more comfortable by remembering that one of the friends whom I value most is suffering equally with myself.

"Be pleased, dearest lady, to let me know how you are; and if writing be troublesome, get dear Mrs. Gastrell to write for you. I hope she is well and able to assist you; and wish that you may so well recover, as to repay her kindness, if she should want you. May you both live long happy together! I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
"14th March, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been much pleased with your late letter, and am glad that my old enemy, Mrs Boswell, begins to feel some remorse. As to Miss Veronica's Scotch, I think it cannot be helped. An English maid you might easily have; but she would still imitate the greater number, as they would be likewise those whom she must most respect. Her dialect will not be gross. Her mamma has not much Scotch, and you have yourself very little. I hope she knows my name, and does not call me *Johnston*.[4]

[1] History of Philip the Second.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Lady Rothes was a native of England, but she had lived long in Scotland, and never, it is said, entirely lost the accent she had acquired there.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 353.—ED.]

[4] Johnson is the most common English forma-

"The immediate cause of my writing is this: One Shaw, who seems a modest and a decent man, has written an Erse Grammar, which a very learned Highlander, Macbean, has, at my request, examined and approved.

"The book is very little, but Mr Shaw has been persuaded by his friends to set it at half a guinea, though I advised only a crown, and thought myself liberal. You, whom the authour considers as a great encourager of ingenious men, will receive a parcel of his proposals and receipts. I have undertaken to give you notice of them, and to solicit your countenance You must ask no poor man, because the price is really too high. Yet such a work deserves patronage.

"It is proposed to augment our club from twenty to thirty, of which I am glad; for as we have several in it whom I do not much like to consort with[1], I am for reducing it to a mere miscellaneous collection of conspicuous men, without any determinate character. * * * * *

I am, dear sir, most affectionately yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

'My respects to madam, to Veronica, to Alexander, to Euphemia, to David."

["TO MRS. ASTON.

"15th March, 1777.

Pemb. MS. "DEAREST MADAM,—The letter with which I was favoured, by the kindness of Mrs. Gastrell, has contributed very little to quiet my solicitude. I am indeed more frighted than by Mrs. Porter's account. Yet since you have had strength to conquer your disorder so as to obtain a partial recovery, I think it reasonable to believe, that the favourable season which is now coming forward may restore you to your former health. Do not, dear madam, lose your courage, nor by despondence or inactivity give way to the disease. Use such exercise as you can bear, and excite cheerful thoughts in your own mind. Do not harass your faculties with laborious attention: nothing is, in my opinion, of more mischievous tendency in a state of body like yours, than deep meditation or perplexing solicitude. Gaiety is a duty, when health requires it. Entertain yourself as you can with small amusements or light conversation, and let nothing but your devotion ever make you serious. But while I exhort you, my dearest lady, to merriment, I am very serious myself. The loss or danger of a friend is not to be considered with indifference; but I derive some consolation from the thought, that you do not languish unattended; that you are not in the hands of strangers or servants, but have a sister at hand to watch your wants and supply them. If, at this distance, I can be of any use, by consulting physicians, or for any other purpose, I hope you will employ me. I have thought on a journey to Staffordshire; and hope, in a few weeks, to climb Stow Hill, and to find there the pleasure which I have so often found. Let me hear again from you. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 4th April, 1777.

After informing him of the death of my little son David, and that I could not come to London this Spring:

"I think it hard that I should be a whole year without seeing you. May I presume to petition for a meeting with you in the autumn? You have, I believe, seen all the cathedrals in England, except that of Carlisle. If you are to be with Dr. Taylor, at Ashbourne, it would not be a great journey to come thither. We may pass a few most agreeable days there by ourselves, and I will accompany you a good part of the way to the southward again. Pray think of this.

"You forget that Mr. Shaw's Erse Grammar was put into your hands by myself last year. Lord Eglintoune put it into mine. I am glad that Mr. Macbean approves of it. I have received Mr. Shaw's proposals for its publication, which I can perceive are written *by the hand of a master*. * * *

"Pray get for me all the editions of 'Walton's Lives.' I have a notion that the republication of them with notes will fall upon me, between Dr. Horne and Lord Hailes[2]."

Mr. Shaw's proposals † for an "Analysis of the Scotch Celtic Language" were thus illuminated by the pen of Johnson:

"Though the Erse dialect of the Celtic language has, from the earliest times, been spoken in Britain, and still subsists in the northern parts and adjacent islands, yet, by the negligence of a people rather warlike than lettered, it has hitherto been left to the caprice and judgment of every speaker, and has floated in the living voice, without the

tion of the surname from *John;* Johnston the Scotch. My illustrious friend observed that many North Britons pronounced his name in their own way.—BOSWELL.

[1] On account of their differing from him as to religion and politicks.—BOSWELL. [Messrs. Burke, Beauclerk, Fox, &c. It was about this time that Mr. Sheridan, Lord Upper-Ossory, Dr. Marlay, and Mr. Dunning were admitted.—ED.]

[2] None of the persons here mentioned executed the work which they had in contemplation. Walton's valuable book, however, has been correctly republished in quarto and octavo, with notes and illustrations by the Rev. Mr. Zouch.—MALONE. [It was also printed at the Clarendon press, in 1805, in two volumes, 12mo., and *one vol.* 8vo., 1824.—HALL.]

steadiness of analogy, or direction of rules. An Erse grammar is an addition to the stores of literature; and its authour hopes for the indulgence always shown to those that attempt to do what was never done before. If his work shall be found defective, it is at least all his own: he is not like other grammarians, a compiler or transcriber; what he delivers, he has learned by attentive observation among his countrymen, who perhaps will be themselves surprised to see that speech reduced to principles, which they have used only by imitation.

"The use of this book will, however, not be confined to the mountains and islands: it will afford a pleasing and important subject of speculation to those whose studies lead them to trace the affinity of languages, and the migrations of the ancient races of mankind."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Glasgow, 24th April, 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Our worthy friend Thrale's death having appeared in the newspapers, and been afterwards contradicted, I have been placed in a state of very uneasy uncertainty, from which I hoped to be relieved by you: but my hopes have as yet been vain. How could you omit to write to me on such an occasion? I shall wait with anxiety.

"I am going to Auchinleck to stay a fortnight with my father. It is better not to be there very long at one time. But frequent renewals of attention are agreeable to him.

"Pray tell me about this edition of 'English Poets, with a Preface, biographical and critical, to each Authour, by Samuel Johnson, LL. D.' which I see advertised. I am delighted with the prospect of it. Indeed I am happy to feel that I am capable of being so much delighted with literature. But is not the charm of this publication chiefly owing to the *magnum nomen* in the front of it?

"What do you say of Lord Chesterfield's Memoirs and last Letters[1]?

"My wife has made marmalade of oranges for you. I left her and my daughters and Alexander all well yesterday. I have taught Veronica to speak of you thus; Dr. Johnson, not Johnston.—I remain, my dear sir, your most affectionate, and obliged humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"3d May, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—The story of Mr. Thrale's death, as he had neither been sick nor in any other danger, made so little impression upon me, that I never thought about obviating its effects on any body else. It is supposed to have been produced by the English custom[2] of making April fools, that is, of sending one another on some foolish errand on the first of April.

"Tell Mrs. Boswell that I shall taste her marmalade cautiously at first. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.* Beware, says the Italian proverb, of a reconciled enemy. But when I find it does me no harm, I shall then receive it, and be thankful for it as a pledge of firm, and, I hope, of unalterable kindness. She is, after all, a dear, dear lady.

"Please to return Dr. Blair thanks for his sermons. The Scotch write English wonderfully well.

* * * * * *

"Your frequent visits to Auchinleck, and your short stay there, are very laudable and very judicious. Your present concord with your father gives me great pleasure; it was all that you seemed to want.

"My health is very bad, and my nights are very unquiet. What can I do to mend them? I have for this summer nothing better in prospect than a journey into Staffordshire and Derbyshire, perhaps with Oxford and Birmingham in my way.

"Make my compliments to Miss Veronica; I must leave it to *her* philosophy to comfort you for the loss of little David. You must remember, that to keep three out of four is more than your share. Mrs Thrale has but four out of eleven.

"I am engaged to write little Lives, and little Prefaces, to a little edition of the English Poets. I think I have persuaded the booksellers to insert something of Thomson and if you could give me some information about him, for the life which we have is very scanty, I should be glad.—I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

To those who delight in tracing the progress of works of literature, it will be an entertainment to compare the limited design with the ample execution of that admirable performance, "The Lives of the English Poets," which is the richest, most beautiful, and indeed most perfect, production of Johnson's pen. His notion of it at this time appears in the preceding letter He has a memorandum in this year:

"29th May, Easter-eve, I treated with booksellers on a bargain, but the time was not long."

The bargain was concerning that undertaking; but his tender conscience seems

[1] [Dr. Maty's posthumous edition of the Memoirs and Miscellaneous Works of Lord Chesterfield, published by Mr. Justamond early in 1777. —ED.]

[2] [Not merely an English custom—the French have the same; but what we call *April fools* they term "*poisson* d'Avril."—ED.]

alarmed, lest it should have intruded too much on his devout preparation for the solemnity of the ensuing day. But, indeed, very little time was necessary for Johnson's concluding a treaty with the bookseller; as he had, I believe, less attention to profit from his labours, than any man to whom literature has been a profession. I shall here insert, from a letter to me from my late worthy friend Mr. Edward Dilly, though of a later date, an account of this plan so happily conceived, since it was the occasion of procuring for us an elegant collection of the best biography and criticism of which our language can boast.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Southill, 26th Sept. 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—You find by this letter, that I am still in the same calm retreat, from the noise and bustle of London, as when I wrote to you last. I am happy to find you had such an agreeable meeting with your old friend Dr. Johnson; I have no doubt your stock is much increased by the interview; few men, nay, I may say, scarcely any man has got that fund of knowledge and entertainment as Dr. Johnson in conversation. When he opens freely, every one is attentive to what he says, and cannot fail of improvement as well as pleasure.

"The edition of the poets, now printing, will do honour to the English press; and a concise account of the life of each authour, by Dr. Johnson, will be a very valuable addition, and stamp the reputation of this edition superiour to any thing that is gone before. The first cause that gave rise to this undertaking, I believe, was owing to the little trifling edition of the poets, printing by the Martins at Edinburgh, and to be sold by Bell in London. Upon examining the volumes which were printed, the type was found so extremely small, that many persons could not read them: not only this inconvenience attended it, but the inaccuracy of the press was very conspicuous. These reasons, as well as the idea of an invasion of what we call our Literary Property, induced the London booksellers to print an elegant and accurate edition of all the English poets of reputation, from Chaucer to the present time.

"Accordingly a select number of the most respectable booksellers met on the occasion: and, on consulting together, agreed, that all the proprietors of copyright in the various poets should be summoned together; and when their opinions were given, to proceed immediately on the business. Accordingly a meeting was held, consisting of about forty of the most respectable booksellers of London, when it was agreed that an elegant and uniform edition of 'The English Poets' should be immediately printed, with a concise account of the life of each authour by Dr. Samuel Johnson; and that three persons should be deputed to wait upon Dr. Johnson, to solicit him to undertake the Lives; viz. T. Davies, Strahan, and Cadell. The Doctor very politely undertook it, and seemed exceedingly pleased with the proposal. As to the terms, it was left entirely to the Doctor to name his own; he mentioned two hundred guineas [1]; it was immediately agreed to; and a farther compliment, I believe, will be made him. A committee was likewise appointed to engage the best engravers, viz. Bartolozzi, Sherwin, Hall, &c. Likewise another committee for giving directions about the paper, printing, &c.; so that the whole will be conducted with spirit, and in the best manner, with respect to authorship, editorship, engravings, &c. &c. My brother will give you a list of the poets we mean to give, many of which are within the time of the Act of Queen Anne, which Martin and Bell cannot give, as they have no property in them: the proprietors are almost all the booksellers in London, of consequence.—I am, dear sir, ever yours,

"EDWARD DILLY."

I shall afterwards have occasion to consider the extensive and varied range which Johnson took, when he was once led upon ground which he trod with a peculiar delight, having long been intimately acquainted with all the circumstances of it that could interest and please.

"DR. JOHNSON TO CHARLES O'CONNOR, ESQ. [2].

"19th May, 1777

"SIR,—Having had the pleasure of conversing with Dr. Campbell about your char-

[1] Johnson's moderation in demanding so small a sum is extraordinary. Had he asked one thousand, or even fifteen hundred guineas, the booksellers, who knew the value of his name, would doubtless have readily given it. They have probably got five thousand guineas by this work in the course of twenty-five years.—MALONE. [It must be recollected that Johnson at first intended very short prefaces—he afterwards expanded his design.—ED.]

[2] Mr. Joseph Cooper Walker, of the treasury, Dublin, who obligingly communicated to me this and a former letter from Dr. Johnson to the same gentleman (for which see vol. i. p. 139), writes to me as follows:—"Perhaps it would gratify you to have some account of Mr. O'Connor. He is an amiable, learned, venerable old gentleman, of an independent fortune, who lives at Belanagar, in the county of Roscommon: he is an admired writer, and member of the Irish Academy. The above letter is alluded to in the preface to the second edition of his 'Dissert.' p. 3." Mr. O'Connor afterwards died at the age of eighty-two, July 1, 1791. See a well-drawn character of him in

acter and your literary undertaking, I am resolved to gratify myself by renewing a correspondence which began and ended a great while ago, and ended, I am afraid, by my fault, a fault which, if you have not forgotten it, you must now forgive.

"If I have ever disappointed you, give me leave to tell you that you have likewise disappointed me. I expected great discoveries in Irish antiquity, and large publications in the Irish language; but the world still remains as it was, doubtful and ignorant. What the Irish language is in itself, and to what languages it has affinity, are very interesting questions, which every man wishes to see resolved that has any philological or historical curiosity. Dr. Leland begins his history too late: the ages which deserve an exact inquiry are those times (*for* such there were [1]) when Ireland was the school of the west, the quiet habitation of sanctity and literature. If you could give a history, though imperfect, of the Irish nation, from its conversion to Christianity to the invasion from England, you would amplify knowledge with new views and new objects. Set about it, therefore, if you can: do what you can easily do without anxious exactness. Lay the foundation, and leave the superstructure to posterity. —I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Early in this year came out, in two volumes quarto, the posthumous works of the learned Dr. Zachary Pearce, bishop of Rochester; being "A Commentary, with Notes, on the four Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles," with other theological pieces. Johnson had now an opportunity of making a grateful return to that excellent prelate [2], who, we have seen, was the only person who gave him any assistance in the compilation of his dictionary. The bishop had left some account of his life and character, written by himself. To this Johnson made some valuable additions †, and also furnished to the editor, the Rev. Mr. Derby [3], a dedication †, which I shall here insert; both because it will appear at this time with peculiar propriety, and because it will tend to propagate and increase that "fervour of *loyalty*," which in me, who boast of the name of tory, is not only a principle, but a passion.

"TO THE KING.

"SIR,—I presume to lay before your majesty the last labours of a learned bishop, who died in the toils and duties of his calling. He is now beyond the reach of all earthly honours and rewards; and only the hope of inciting others to imitate him, makes it now fit to be remembered, that he enjoyed in his life the favour of your majesty.

"The tumultuary life of princes seldom permits them to survey the wide extent of national interest, without losing sight of private merit; to exhibit qualities which may be imitated by the highest and the humblest of mankind; and to be at once amiable and great.

"Such characters, if now and then they appear in history, are contemplated with admiration. May it be the ambition of all your subjects to make haste with their tribute of reverence! and as posterity may learn from your majesty how kings should live, may they learn likewise from your people how they should be honoured!—I am, may it please your majesty, with the most profound respect, your majesty's most dutiful and devoted subject and servant."

In the summer he wrote a prologue * which was spoken before "A Word to the Wise," a comedy by Mr. Hugh Kelly, which had been brought upon the stage in 1770; but he being a writer for ministry in one of the newspapers, it fell a sacrifice to popular fury, and in the playhouse phrase, was *damned*. By the generosity of Mr. Harris, the proprietor of Covent-garden theatre, it was now exhibited for one night, for the benefit of the authour's widow and children. To conciliate the favour of the audience was the intention of Johnson's prologue, which, as it is not long, I shall here insert, as a proof that his poetical talents were in no degree impaired.

the "Gentleman's Magazine" for August, 1791. —BOSWELL.

[1] [In Anderson's "Sketches of the Native Irish," p. 5. ed. 1828, there is on these words, "FOR *such there were*," the following note: "These words were misquoted by Dr. Campbell in his strictures, 'IF *such there were*,' although he was actually the bearer of the letter to O'Connor." The editor confesses that Dr. Campbell's reading seems the more probable of the two.—ED.]

[2] [Mrs. Thrale, in one of her letters, repeats a curious anecdote of this prelate, which she probably had from Dr. Johnson himself: "We will act as Dr. Zachary Pearce, the famous bishop of Rochester, did, when he lost the wife he so much loved—call for one glass to the health of her who is departed never more to return, and then go quietly back to the usual duties of life, and forbear to mention her again from that time to the last day of it."—*Lett.* 2. p. 213. But he survived his lady but a few months, and his death was (if not occasioned) certainly accelerated by her loss. She died 23d Oct. 1773, and he 29th June, 1774, after a union of fifty-one years.—ED.]

[3] [Died 6th Oct. 1778, the Rev. J. Derby, A. M. rector of Southfleet and Longfield in Kent, and one of the six preachers in Canterbury Cathedral.—*Gent. Mag.* He had married Bishop Pearce's niece. Johnson in a letter to Mrs. Thrale,—"My clerical friend Derby is dead"—ED.]

"This night presents a play, which publick rage,
Or right or wrong, once hooted from the stage:
From zeal or malice now no more we dread,
For English vengeance *wars not with the dead.*
A generous foe regards with pitying eye
The man whom fate has laid where all must lie.
To wit, reviving from its authour's dust,
Be kind, ye judges, or at least be just:
Let no renewed hostilities invade
Th' oblivious grave's inviolable shade.
Let one great payment every claim appease,
And him who cannot hurt, allow to please;
To please by scenes, unconscious of offence,
By harmless merriment or useful sense.
Where aught of bright or fair the piece displays,
Approve it only;—'tis too late to praise.
If want of skill or want of care appear,
Forbear to hiss;—the poet cannot hear.
By all, like him, must praise and blame be found,
At last, a fleeting gleam or empty sound:
Yet then shall calm reflection bless the night,
When liberal pity dignified delight;
When pleasure fired her torch at virtue's flame,
And mirth was bounty with an humbler name."

[Dr. Johnson, indeed, was always liberal in granting literary assistance to others; and innumerable are the prefaces, sermons, lectures, and dedications, which he used to make for people who begged of him. Mr. Murphy related in his hearing one day, and he did not deny it, that when Murphy joked him the week before for having been so diligent of late between Dodd's sermon and Kelly's prologue, Dr. Johnson replied, "Why, sir, when they come to me with a dead staymaker and a dying parson, what can a man do?" He said, however, that "he hated to give away literary performances, or even to sell them too cheaply: the next generation shall not accuse me," added he, "of beating down the price of literature: one hates, besides, ever to give that which one has been accustomed to sell; would not you, sir," turning to Mr. Thrale, "rather give away money than porter?"] Piozzi, p. 39, 40.

A circumstance which could not fail to be very pleasing to Johnson occurred this year. The tragedy of "Sir Thomas Overbury," written by his early companion in London, Richard Savage, was brought out with alterations at Drury-lane theatre [1]. The prologue to it was written by Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan; in which, after describing very pathetically the wretchedness of

"Ill-fated Savage, at whose birth was given
No parent but the muse, no friend but Heaven,"

he introduced an elegant compliment to Johnson on his Dictionary, that wonderful performance which cannot be too often or too highly praised; of which Mr. Harris, in his "Philological Inquiries [2]," justly and liberally observes, "Such is its merit, that our language does not possess a more copious, learned, and valuable work." The concluding lines of this prologue were these:

"So pleads the tale [3] that gives to future times
The son's misfortunes and the parent's crimes:
There shall his fame (if own'd to-night) survive,
Fix'd by the hand that bids our language live."

Mr. Sheridan here at once did honour to his taste and to his liberality of sentiment, by showing that he was not prejudiced from the unlucky difference which had taken place between his worthy father and Dr. Johnson [4]. I have already mentioned that Johnson was very desirous of reconciliation with old Mr. Sheridan. It will, therefore, not seem at all surprising that he was zealous in acknowledging the brilliant merit of his son. While it had as yet been displayed only in the drama, Johnson proposed him as a member of the Literary Club, observing, that "He who has written the two best comedies of his age is surely a consid erable man." And he had, accordingly, the honour to be elected; for an honour it undoubtedly must be allowed to be, when it is considered of whom that society consists, and that a single black ball excludes a candidate.

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"9th July, 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—For the health of my wife and children I have taken the little country-house at which you visited my uncle, Dr. Boswell, who, having lost his wife, is gone to live with his son. We took possession of our villa about a week ago. We have a garden of three quarters of an acre, well stocked with fruit-trees and flowers, and gooseberries and currants, and pease and beans, and cabbages, &c. &c. and my children are quite happy. I now write to you in a little study, from the window of which I see around me a verdant grove, and beyond it the lofty mountain called *Arthur's Seat*

"Your last letter, in which you desire me

[1] Our authour has here fallen into a slight mistake: the prologue to this revived tragedy being written by Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Boswell very naturally supposed that it was performed at Drury-lane theatre. But in fact, as Mr. Kemble observes to me, it was acted at the theatre in Covent Garden. MALONE.

[2] Part First, chap. iv.—BOSWELL.

[3] "Life of Richard Savage, by Dr. Johnson."—SHERIDAN.

[4] [He likewise made some retribution to Dr. Johnson for the attack he had meditated, about two years before, on the pamphlet he had published about the American question, entitled, "*Taxation no Tyranny.*" Some fragments found among Sheridan's papers show that he had intended answering this pamphlet in no very courteous way.—See *Moore's Life*, vol ' p. 152 -- HALL.]

to send you some additional information concerning Thomson, reached me very fortunately just as I was going to Lanark, to put my wife's two nephews, the young Campbells, to school there, under the care of Mr. Thomson, the master of it, whose wife is sister to the authour of 'The Seasons.' She is an old woman; but her memory is very good; and she will with pleasure give me for you every particular that you wish to know, and she can tell. Pray then take the trouble to send me such questions as may lead to biographical materials. You say that the Life which we have of Thomson is scanty. Since I received your letter, I have read his Life, published under the name of Cibber, but, as you told me, really written by a Mr. Shiels [1]; that written by Dr. Murdoch; one prefixed to an edition of the 'Seasons,' published at Edinburgh, which is compounded of both, with the addition of an anecdote of Quin's relieving Thomson from prison; the abridgement of Murdoch's account of him, in the 'Biographia Britannica,' and another abridgement of it in the 'Biographical Dictionary,' enriched with Dr. Joseph Warton's critical panegyrick on the 'Seasons,' in his 'Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope:' from all these it appears to me that we have a pretty full account of this poet. However, you will, I doubt not, show me many blanks, and I shall do what can be done to have them filled up. As Thomson never returned to Scotland (which *you* will think very wise), his sister can speak from her own knowledge only as to the early part of his life. She has some letters from him, which may probably give light as to his more advanced progress, if she will let us see them, which I suppose she will. I believe George Lewis Scott [2] and Dr. Armstrong are now his only surviving companions, while he lived in and about London; and they, I dare say, can tell more of him than is yet known. My own notion is, that Thomson was a much coarser man than his friends are willing to acknowledge His 'Seasons' are indeed full of elegant and pious sentiments; but a rank soil, nay a dunghill, will produce beautiful flowers.

"Your edition [3] of the 'English Poets' will be very valuable, on account of the 'Prefaces and Lives.' But I have seen a specimen of an edition of the Poets at the Apollo press, at Edinburgh, which, for excellence in printing and engraving, highly deserves a liberal encouragement.

"Most sincerely do I regret the bad health and bad rest with which you have been afflicted; and I hope you are better. I cannot believe that the prologue which you generously gave to Mr. Kelly's widow and children the other day is the effusion of one in sickness and in disquietude: but external circumstances are never sure indications of the state of man. I send you a letter which I wrote to you two years ago at Wilton; and did not send it at the time, for fear of being reproved as indulging too much tenderness: and one written to you at the tomb of Melancthon, which I kept back, lest I should appear at once too superstitious and too enthusiastick. I now imagine that perhaps they may please you.

"You do not take the least notice of my proposal for our meeting at Carlisle [4]. Though I have meritoriously refrained from visiting London this year, I ask you if it would not be wrong that I should be two years without having the benefit of your conversation, when, if you come down as far as Derbyshire, we may meet at the expense of a few days' journeying and not many pounds. I wish you to see Carlisle, which made me mention that place. But if you have not a desire to complete your tour of the English cathedrals, I will take a larger share of the road between this place and Ashbourne. So tell me *where* you will fix for our passing a few days by ourselves.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 60. It is particularly observable that the Life of Thomson which Mr. Boswell here represents Johnson as stating to have been especially written by Shiels, bears strong marks of having been written by Theophilus Cibber.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 78 —Ed.]

[3] Dr. Johnson was not the *editor* of this collection of the English Poets; he merely furnished the biographical prefaces with which it is enriched, as is rightly stated in a subsequent page. He, indeed, from a virtuous motive, recommended the works of four or five poets (whom he has named) to be added to the collection; but he is no otherwise answerable for any which are found there, or any which are omitted. The poems of Goldsmith (whose life I know he intended to write, for I collected some materials for it by his desire), were omitted in consequence of a petty exclusive interest in some of them, vested in Mr. Carnan, a bookseller.—Malone.

[4] Dr. Johnson had himself talked of our seeing Carlisle together. *High* was a favourite word of his to denote a person of rank. He said to me, "Sir, I believe we may meet at the house of a Roman Catholick lady in Cumberland; a high lady, sir." I afterwards discovered that he meant Mrs. Strickland [see *ante*, p. 16.—Ed.], sister of Charles Townley, Esq. whose very noble collection of statues and pictures is not more to be admired, than his extraordinary and polite readiness in showing it, which I and several of my friends have agreeably experienced. They who are possessed of valuable stores of gratification to persons of taste should exercise their benevolence in imparting the pleasure. Grateful acknowledgments are due to Welbore Ellis Agar, Esq. for the liberal access which he is pleased to allow to his exquisite collection of pictures.—Boswell.

Now do n't cry 'foolish fellow,' or 'idle dog.' Chain your humour, and let your kindness play.

"You will rejoice to hear that Miss Macleod [1], of Rasay, is married to Colonel Mure Campbell, an excellent man, with a pretty good estate of his own, and the prospect of having the Earl of Loudoun's fortune and honours. Is not this a noble lot for our fair Hebridean? How happy am I that she is to be in Ayrshire! We shall have the Laird of Rasay, and old Malcolm, and I know not how many gallant Macleods, and bagpipes, &c. &c. at Auchinleck. Perhaps you may meet them all there.

"Without doubt you have read what is called 'The *Life* of David Hume,' written by himself, with the letter from Adam Smith subjoined to it. Is not this an age of daring effrontery? My friend Mr. Anderson, professor of natural philosophy at Glasgow, at whose house you and I supped, and to whose care Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, was intrusted at that university, paid me a visit lately; and after we had talked with indignation and contempt of the poisonous productions with which this age is infested, he said there was now an excellent opportunity for Dr. Johnson to step forth. I agreed with him that you might knock Hume's and Smith's heads together, and make vain and ostentatious infidelity exceedingly ridiculous. Would it not be worth your while to crush such noxious weeds in the moral garden?

"You have said nothing to me of Dr. Dodd [2]. I know not how you think on that subject; though the newspapers give us a saying of yours in favour of mercy to him. But I own I am very desirous that the royal prerogative of remission of punishment should be employed to exhibit an illustrious instance of the regard which God's *Vicegerent* will ever show to piety and virtue. If for ten righteous men the Almighty would have spared Sodom, shall not a thousand acts of goodness done by Dr. Dodd counterbalance one crime? Such an instance would do more to encourage goodness, than his execution would do to deter from vice. I am not afraid of any bad consequence to society; for who will persevere for a long course of years in a distinguished discharge of religious duties, with a view to commit a forgery with impunity?

"Pray make my best compliments acceptable to Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, by assuring them of my hearty joy that the *master*, as you call him, is alive. I hope I shall often taste his champagne—*soberly*.

"I have not heard from Langton for a long time. I suppose he is as usual,

'Studious the busy moments to deceive.'

* * * * * * *

"I remain, my dear sir, your most affectionate and faithful humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

On the 23d of June, I again wrote to Dr. Johnson, enclosing a shipmaster's receipt for a jar of orange-marmalade, and a large packet of Lord Hailes's "Annals of Scotland."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"28th June, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—I have just received your packet from Mr. Thrale's, but have not daylight enough to look much into it. I am glad that I have credit enough with Lord Hailes to be trusted with more copy. I hope to take more care of it than of the last. I return Mrs. Boswell my affectionate thanks for her present, which I value as a token of reconciliation.

"Poor Dodd was put to death yesterday, in opposition to the recommendation of the jury,—the petition of the city of London,—and a subsequent petition signed by three-and-twenty thousand hands. Surely the voice of the publick, when it calls so loudly, and calls only for mercy, ought to be heard.

"The saying that was given me in the papers I never spoke; but I wrote many of his petitions, and some of his letters. He applied to me very often. He was, I am afraid, long flattered with hopes of life; but I had no part in the dreadful delusion; for as soon as the king had signed his sentence, I obtained from Mr. Chamier [3] an account of the disposition of the court towards him, with a declaration that there *was no hope even of a respite*. This letter immediately was laid before Dodd; but he believed those whom he wished to be right, as it is thought, till within three days of his end. He died with pious composure and resolution. I have just seen the Ordinary that attended him. His address to his fellow-convicts offended the methodists; but he had a Moravian with him much of his time. His moral character is very bad. I hope all is not true that is charged upon him. Of his behaviour in prison an account will be published.

"I give you joy of your country-house and your pretty garden, and hope some time to see you in your felicity. I was much pleased with your two letters that had been kept so long in store [4]; and rejoice at

[1] [*Ante*, v. i. p. 383.—ED.]

[2] [The whole story of Dodd is told in detail, *post*, 15th Sept. 1777.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Chamier was then Under-Secretary of State.—ED.]

[4] Since they have been so much honoured by Dr. Johnson, I shall here insert them:

"TO MR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Sunday, 30th Sept. 1764.

"MY EVER DEAR AND MUCH-RESPECTED SIR,—You know my solemn enthusiasm of mind

Miss Rasay's advancement, and wish Sir Allan success.

"I hope to meet you somewhere towards the north, but am loath to come quite to Carlisle. Can we not meet at Manchester? But we will settle it in some other letters.

"Mr Seward[1], a great favourite at Streatham, has been, I think, enkindled by our travels with a curiosity to see the Highlands. I have given him letters to you and Beattie. He desires that a lodging may be taken for him at Edinburgh against his arrival. He is just setting out.

"Langton has been exercising the militia Mrs. Williams is, I fear, declining. Dr Lawrence says he can do no more. She is gone to summer in the country, with as many conveniences about her as she can expect; but I have no great hope. We must all die: may we all be prepared!

"I suppose Miss Boswell reads her book, and young Alexander takes to his learning. Let me hear about them; for every thing that belongs to you, belongs in a more remote degree, and not, I hope, very remote, to, dear sir, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"24th June, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—This gentleman is a great favourite at Streatham, and therefore you will easily believe that he has very valuable qualities. Our narrative has kindled him with a desire of visiting the Highlands after having already seen a great part of Europe. You must receive him as a friend, and when you have directed him to the curiosities of Edinburgh, give him instructions and recommendations for the rest of his journey. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson's benevolence to the unfortunate was, I am confident, as steady and active as that of any of those who have been most eminently distinguished for that virtue. Innumerable proofs of it I have no doubt will be forever concealed from mortal eyes. We may, however, form some judgment of it from the many and various instances which have been discovered. One, which happened in the course of this summer, is remarkable from the name and connexion of the person who was the object of it. The circumstance to which I allude is ascertained by two letters, one to Mr. Langton, and another to the Rev. Dr. Vyse, rector of Lambeth, son of the respectable clergyman at Lichfield, who was contemporary with Johnson, and in whose father's family Johnson had the happiness of being kindly received in his early years.

"DR. JOHNSON TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"29th June, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—I have lately been much

You love me for it, and I respect myself for it, because in so far I resemble Mr. Johnson. You will be agreeably surprised, when you learn the reason of my writing this letter. I am at Wittemberg in Saxony. I am in the old church where the Reformation was first preached, and where some of the reformers lie interred. I cannot resist the serious pleasure of writing to Mr. Johnson from the tomb of Melancthon. My paper rests upon the grave-stone of that great and good man, who was undoubtedly the worthiest of all the reformers. He wished to reform abuses which had been introduced into the church; but had no private resentment to gratify. So mild was he, that when his aged mother consulted him with anxiety on the perplexing disputes of the times, he advised her 'to keep to the old religion.' At this tomb, then, my ever dear and respected friend, I vow to thee an eternal attachment. It shall be my study to do what I can to render your life happy: and if you die before me, I shall endeavour to do honour to your memory; and, elevated by the remembrance of you, persist in noble piety. May God, the father of all beings, ever bless you! and may you continue to love your most affectionate friend and devoted servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Wilton-house, 22d April, 1775.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Every scene of my life confirms the truth of what you have told me, 'there is no certain happiness in this state of being.' I am here, amidst all that you know is at Lord Pembroke's; and yet I am weary and gloomy. I am just setting out for the house of an old friend in Devonshire, and shall not get back to London for a week yet. You said to me last Good Friday, with a cordiality that warmed my heart, that if I came to settle in London we should have a day fixed every week to meet by ourselves and talk freely. To be thought worthy of such a privilege cannot but exalt me. During my present absence from you, while, notwithstanding the gaiety which you allow me to possess, I am darkened by temporary clouds, I beg to have a few lines from you; a few lines merely of kindness, as a *viaticum* till I see you again. In your 'Vanity of Human Wishes,' and in Parnell's 'Contentment,' I find the only sure means of enjoying happiness; or, at least, the hopes of happiness. I ever am, with reverence and affection, most faithfully yours,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

[1] William Seward, Esq. F. R. S. editor of "Anecdotes of some distinguished Persons," &c. in four volumes, 8vo. well known to a numerous and valuable acquaintance for his literature, love of the fine arts, and social virtues. I am indebted to him for several communications concerning Johnson.—BOSWELL. This gentleman, who was born in 1747, and was educated at the Charter-house and at Oxford, died in London, April 24th, 1799.—MALONE. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 255.—ED.]

disordered by a difficulty of breathing, but am now better. I hope your house is well.

"You know we have been talking lately of St. Cross, at Winchester[1]: I have an old acquaintance whose distress makes him very desirous of an hospital, and I am afraid I have not strength enough to get him into the Chartreux. He is a painter, who never rose higher than to get his immediate living; and from that, at eighty-three, he is disabled by a slight stroke of the palsy, such as does not make him at all helpless on common occasions, though his hand is not steady enough for his art.

"My request is, that you will try to obtain a promise of the next vacancy from the Bishop of Chester. It is not a great thing to ask, and I hope we shall obtain it. Dr. Warton has promised to favour him with his notice, and I hope he may end his days in peace I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REV. DR. VYSE, AT LAMBETH.
"9th July, 1777.

"SIR,—I doubt not but you will readily forgive me for taking the liberty of requesting your assistance in recommending an old friend to his grace the archbishop as governor of the Charter-house.

"His name is De Groot[2]; he was born at Gloucester; I have known him many years. He has all the common claims to charity, being old, poor, and infirm to a great degree. He has likewise another claim, to which no scholar can refuse attention; he is by several descents the nephew of Hugo Grotius; of him from whom perhaps every man of learning has learnt something. Let it not be said that in any lettered country a nephew of Grotius asked a charity and was refused. I am, reverend sir, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REV. DR. VYSE, AT LAMBETH.
"22d July, 1777.

"If any notice should be taken of the recommendation which I took the liberty of sending you, it will be necessary to know that Mr. De Groot is to be found at No. 8, in Pye-street, Westminster. This information, when I wrote, I could not give you; and being going soon to Lichfield, think it necessary to be left behind me.

"More I will not say. You will want no persuasion to succour the nephew of Grotius. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 223.—ED.]

[2] [It appears that Isaac de Groot was admitted into the Charter-house, where he died about two years after.—ED.]

"THE REV. DR. VYSE TO MR. BOSWELL.
"Lambeth, 9th June, 1787.

"SIR,—I have searched in vain for the letter which I spoke of, and which I wished, at your desire, to communicate to you. It was from Dr. Johnson, to return me thanks for my application to archbishop Cornwallis in favour of poor De Groot. He rejoices at the success it met with, and is lavish in the praise he bestows upon his favourite, Hugo Grotius. I am really sorry that I cannot find this letter, as it is worthy of the writer. That which I send you enclosed[3] is at your service. It is very short, and will not perhaps be thought of any consequence, unless you should judge proper to consider it as a proof of the very humane part which Dr. Johnson took in behalf of a distressed and deserving person. I am, sir, your most obedient humble servant, "W. VYSE[4]."

[With advising others to be charitable, Dr. Johnson did not content himself. He gave away all he had, and all he ever had gotten, except the two thousand pounds he left behind; and the very small portion of his income which he spent on himself, his friends never could by any calculation make more than seventy, or at most fourscore pounds a year, and he pretended to allow himself a hundred. He had numberless dependants out of doors as well as in, "who," as he expressed it, "did not like to see him latterly unless he brought them money." For those people he used frequently to raise contributions on his richer friends[5]; "and this," he said, "is one of the thousand reasons which ought to restrain a man from drony solitude and useless retirement."] Piozzi p. 80.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. EDWARD DILLY.
"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 7th July, 1777.

"SIR,—To the collection of English

[3] The preceding letter.—BOSWELL.

[4] Dr. Vyse, at my request, was so obliging as once more to endeavour to recover the letter of Johnson, to which he alludes, but without success; for April 23, 1800, he wrote to me thus; "I have again searched, but in vain, for one of his letters, in which he speaks in his own nervous style of Hugo Grotius. De Groot was clearly a descendant of the family of Grotius, and Archbishop Cornwallis willingly complied with Dr. Johnson's request."—MALONE. [These letters appear in the *Gent. Mag.* 1787 and 1799, dated from London only, and seem to have been addressed to Mr. Sharpe.—ED.]

[5] [It appears in Mr. Malone's MS. notes, furnished by Mr. Markland, Dr. Johnson once asked Mr. Gerard Hamilton for so much as *fifty* pounds for a charitable purpose, and Mr. Hamilton gave it; but see *post*, March 22, 1782, (Diary) note 2. Sir Joshua Reynolds, however, told Mr. Malone that he never asked him for more than a guinea.—ED.]

Poets I have recommended the volume of Dr. Watts to be added: his name has long been held by me in veneration, and I would not willingly be reduced to tell of him only that he was born and died. Yet of his life I know very little, and therefore must pass him in a manner very unworthy of his character, unless some of his friends will favour me with the necessary information. Many of them must be known to you; and by your influence perhaps I may obtain some instruction: my plan does not exact much; but I wish to distinguish Watts, a man who never wrote but for a good purpose. Be pleased to do for me what you can. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 15th July, 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The fate of poor Dr. Dodd made a dismal impression upon my mind.

* * * * * * *

"I had sagacity enough to divine that you wrote his speech to the recorder, before sentence was pronounced. I am glad you have written so much for him; and I hope to be favoured with an exact list of the several pieces when we meet.

"I received Mr. Seward as the friend of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and as a gentleman recommended by Dr. Johnson to my attention. I have introduced him to Lord Kames, Lord Monboddo, and Mr. Nairne. He is gone to the Highlands with Dr. Gregory; when he returns I shall do more for him.

"Sir Allan Maclean has carried that branch of his cause, of which we had good hopes; the president and one other judge only were against him. I wish the house of lords may do as well as the court of session has done. But Sir Allan has not the lands of *Brolos* quite cleared by this judgment, till a long account is made up of debts and interests on the one side, and rents on the other. I am, however, not much afraid of the balance.

"Macquarry's estates, Staffa and all, were sold yesterday, and bought by a Campbell. I fear he will have little or nothing left out of the purchase money.

"I send you the case against the negro, by Mr. Cullen, son to Dr. Cullen, in opposition to Maclaurin's for liberty, of which you have approved. Pray read this, and tell me what you think as a *politician*, as well as a *poet*, upon the subject.

"Be so kind as to let me know how your time is to be distributed next autumn. I will meet you at Manchester, or where you please; but I wish you would complete your tour of the cathedrals, and come to Carlisle, and I will accompany you a part of the way homewards. I am ever, most faithfully yours, "JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"22d July, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—Your notion of the necessity of an early interview is very pleasing to both my vanity and tenderness. I shall perhaps come to Carlisle another year; but my money has not held out so well as it used to do. I shall go to Ashbourne, and I purpose to make Dr. Taylor invite you. If you live awhile with me at his house, we shall have much time to ourselves, and our stay will be no expense to us or him. I shall leave London the 28th; and, after some stay at Oxford and Lichfield, shall probably come to Ashbourne about the end of your session; but of all this you shall have notice. Be satisfied we will meet somewhere.

"What passed between me and poor Dr. Dodd, you shall know more fully when we meet.

"Of lawsuits there is no end: poor Sir Allan must have another trial; for which, however, his antagonist cannot be much blamed, having two judges on his side. I am more afraid of the debts than of the house of lords. It is scarcely to be imagined to what debts will swell, that are daily increasing by small additions, and how carelessly in a state of desperation debts are contracted. Poor Macquarry was far from thinking that when he sold his islands he should receive nothing. For what were they sold? and what was their yearly value? The admission of money into the Highlands will soon put an end to the feudal modes of life, by making those men landlords who were not chiefs. I do not know that the people will suffer by the change; but there was in the patriarchal authority something venerable and pleasing. Every eye must look with pain on a *Campbell* turning the *Macquarries* at will out of their *sedes avitæ*, their hereditary island.

"Sir Alexander Dick is the only Scots man liberal enough not to be angry that I could not find trees where trees were not. I was much delighted by his kind letter.

"I remember Rasay with too much pleasure not to partake of the happiness of any part of that amiable family. Our ramble in the Highlands hangs upon my imagination: I can hardly help imagining that we shall go again. Pennant seems to have seen a great deal which we did not see. when we travel again let us look better about us.

"You have done right in taking your uncle's house. Some change in the form of life gives from time to time a new epocha of existence. In a new place there is some-

thing new to be done, and a different system of thoughts rises in the mind. I wish I could gather currants in your garden. Now fit up a little study, and have your books ready at hand: do not spare a little money, to make your habitation pleasing to yourself.

"I have dined lately with poor dear ———[1]. I do not think he goes on well. His table is rather coarse, and he has his children too much about him[2]. But he is a very good man.

"Mrs. Williams is in the country, to try if she can improve her health: she is very ill. Matters have come so about, that she is in the country with very good accommodation; but age, and sickness, and pride, have made her so peevish, that I was forced to bribe the maid to stay with her by a secret stipulation of half-a-crown a week over her wages.

"Our club ended its session about six weeks ago. We now only meet to dine once a fortnight. Mr. Dunning, the great lawyer[3], is one of our members. The Thrales are well.

"I long to know how the negro's cause will be decided. What is the opinion of Lord Auchinleck, or Lord Hailes, or Lord Monboddo? I am, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. BOSWELL.
"22d July, 1777.

"MADAM,—Though I am well enough pleased with the taste of sweetmeats, very little of the pleasure which I received at the arrival of your jar of marmalade arose from eating it. I received it as a token of friendship, as a proof of reconciliation, things much sweeter than sweetmeats, and upon this consideration I return you, dear madam, my sincerest thanks. By having your kindness I think I have a double security for the continuance of Mr. Boswell's, which it is not to be expected that any man can long keep, when the influence of a lady so highly and so justly valued operates against him. Mr. Boswell will tell you that I was always faithful to your interest, and always endeavoured to exalt you in his estimation. You must now do the same for me. We must all help one another, and you must now consider me as, dear madam, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.
"Edinburgh, 28th July, 1777

"MY DEAR SIR,—This is the day on which you were to leave London, and I have been amusing myself in the intervals of my law-drudgery with figuring you in the Oxford post-coach. I doubt, however, if you have had so merry a journey as you and I had in that vehicle last year, when you made so much sport with Gwyn, the architect. Incidents upon a journey are recollected with peculiar pleasure: they are preserved in brisk spirits, and come up again in our minds, tinctured with that gaiety, or at least that animation, with which we first perceived them."

* * * * * *

(I added, that something had occurred which I was afraid might prevent me from meeting him; and that my wife had been affected with complaints which threatened a consumption, but was now better.)

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. THRALE.
"[Oxford], 4th Aug. 1777.

"Boswell's project is disconcerted by a visit from a relation of Yorkshire, whom he mentions as the head of his clan. Bozzy, you know, makes a huge bustle about all his own motions and all mine. I have enclosed a letter to pacify him, and reconcile him to the uncertainties of human life."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
"Oxford, 4th Aug. 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—Do not disturb yourself about our interviews; I hope we shall have many: nor think it any thing hard or unusual that your design of meeting me is interrupted. We have both endured greater evils, and have greater evils to expect.

"Mrs. Boswell's illness makes a more serious distress. Does the blood rise from her lungs or from her stomach? From little vessels broken in the stomach there is no danger. Blood from the lungs is, I believe, always frothy, as mixed with wind. Your physicians know very well what is to be done. The loss of such a lady would, indeed, be very afflictive, and I hope she is in no danger. Take care to keep her mind as easy as possible.

"I have left Langton in London. He has been down with the militia, and is again quiet at home, talking to his little people, as I suppose you do sometimes

[1] [Mr. Langton.—ED.]

[2] This very just remark I hope will be constantly held in remembrance by parents, who are in general too apt to indulge their own fond feelings for their children at the expense of their friends. The common custom of introducing them after dinner is highly injudicious. It is agreeable enough that they should appear at any other time; but they should not be suffered to poison the moments of festivity by attracting the attention of the company, and in a manner compelling them from politeness to say what they do not think.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Created in 1782 Lord Ashburton.—ED.]

Make my compliments to Miss Veronica[1]. The rest are too young for ceremony.

"I cannot but hope that you have taken your country-house at a very seasonable time, and that it may conduce to restore or establish Mrs. Boswell's health, as well as provide room and exercise for the young ones. That you and your lady may both be happy, and long enjoy your happiness, is the sincere and earnest wish of, dear sir, your most, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

(Informing him that my wife had continued to grow better, so that my alarming apprehensions were relieved: and that I hoped to disengage myself from the other embarrassment which had occurred, and therefore requesting to know particularly when he intended to be at Ashbourne.)

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"30th August, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—I am this day come to Ashbourne, and have only to tell you, that Dr. Taylor says you shall be welcome to him, and you know how welcome you will be to me. Make haste to let me know when you may be expected.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and tell her I hope we shall be at variance no more. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Ashbourne, 1st Sept. 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—On Saturday I wrote a very short letter, immediately upon my arrival hither, to show you that I am not less desirous of the interview than yourself. Life admits not of delays; when pleasure can be had, it is fit to catch it: every hour takes away part of the things that please us, and perhaps part of our disposition to be pleased. When I came to Lichfield, I found my old friend Harry Jackson dead[2]. It was a loss, and a loss not to be repaired, as he was one of the companions of my childhood. I hope we may long continue to gain friends; but the friends which merit or usefulness can procure us are not able to supply the place of old acquaintance, with whom the days of youth may be retraced, and those images revived which gave the earliest delight. If you and I live to be much older, we shall take great delight in talking over the Hebridean Journey.

"In the mean time it may not be amiss to contrive some other little adventure, but what it can be I know not; leave it, as Sidney says,

'To virtue, fortune, time, and woman's breast[3];'

for I believe Mrs. Boswell must have some part in the consultation.

"One thing you will like. The Doctor, so far as I can judge, is likely to leave us enough to ourselves. He was out to-day before I came down, and, I fancy, will stay out to dinner. I have brought the papers

[1] This young lady, the authour's eldest daughter, and at this time about five years old, died in London, of a consumption, four months after her father, Sept. 26, 1795.—MALONE.

[2] [See *ante*, p. 43. He says in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, "Lichfield, 7th August, 1777.—At Birmingham I heard of the death of an old friend, and at Lichfield of the death of another. *Anni prædantur euntes.* One was a little older, and the other a little younger than myself." The latter probably was Jackson.—ED.]

[3] By an odd mistake, in the first three editions we find a reading in this line to which Dr. Johnson would by no means have subscribed, *wine* having been substituted for *time*. That errour probably was a mistake in the transcript of Johnson's original letter, his hand-writing being often very difficult to read. The other deviation in the beginning of the line (*virtue* instead of *nature*) must be attributed to his memory having deceived him; and therefore has not been disturbed. The verse quoted is the concluding line of a sonnet of Sidney's, of which the earliest copy, I believe, is found in Harrington's translation of Ariosto, 1591, in the notes on the eleventh book:—"And therefore," says he, "that excellent verse of Sir Philip Sydney, in his first Arcadia (which I know not by what mishap is left out in the printed booke) [4to. 1590,] is in mine opinion worthie to be praised and followed, to make a true and virtuous wife:

"Who doth desire that chast his wife should bee,
First be he true, for truth does truth deserve;
Then be he such, as she his worth may see,
And, alwaies one, credit with her preserve:
Not toying kynd, nor causelessly unkynd,
Not stirring thoughts, nor yet denying right,
Not spying faults, nor in plaine errors blind,
Never hard hand, nor ever rayns (reins) too light
As far from want, as far from vaine expence,
Th' one doth enforce, the t'other doth entice:
Allow good companie, but drive from thence
All filthie mouths that glorie in their vice:
This done, thou hast no more but leave the rest
To *nature*, fortune, *time*, and woman's breast."

I take this opportunity to add, that in England's Parnassus, a collection of poetry printed in 1600, the second couplet of this sonnet is thus corruptly exhibited:

"Then *he be* such as *he* his *words* may see,
And alwaies one credit *which* her preserve:"

a variation which I the rather mention, because the readings of that book have been triumphantly quoted, when they happened to coincide with the sophistications of the second folio edition of Shakspeare's plays in 1632, as adding I know not what degree of authority and authenticity to the latter: as if the corruptions of one book (and that abounding with the grossest falsifications of the authour from whose works its extracts are made) could give any kind of support to another, which in every page is still more adulterated and unfaithful. See Mr. Steevens's Shakspeare, vol. xx. p. 97, fifth edit. 1803.—MALONE.

about poor Dodd, to show you, but you will soon have despatched them.

"Before I came away, I sent poor Mrs. Williams into the country, very ill of a pituitous defluxion, which wastes her gradually away, and which her physician declares himself unable to stop. I supplied her as far as could be desired with all conveniences to make her excursion and abode pleasant and useful. But I am afraid she can only linger a short time in a morbid state of weakness and pain.

"The Thrales, little and great, are all well, and purpose to go to Brighthelmstone at Michaelmas. They will invite me to go with them, and perhaps I may go, but I hardly think I shall like to stay the whole time; but of futurity we know but little.

"Mrs. Porter is well; but Mrs. Aston, one of the ladies at Stow-hill, has been struck with a palsy, from which she is not likely ever to recover. How soon may such a stroke fall upon us!

"Write to me, and let us know when we may expect you. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 9th Sept. 1777.

(After informing him that I was to set out next day, in order to meet him at Ashbourne;—)

"I have a present for you from Lord Hailes; the fifth book of 'Lactantius,' which he has published with Latin notes. He is also to give you a few anecdotes for your 'Life of Thomson,' who I find was private tutor to the present Earl of Hadington, Lord Hailes's cousin, a circumstance not mentioned by Dr. Murdoch. I have keen expectations of delight from your edition of the English Poets.

"I am sorry for poor Mrs. Williams's situation. You will, however, have the comfort of reflecting on your kindness to her. Mr. Jackson's death, and Mrs. Aston's palsy, are gloomy circumstances. Yet surely we should be habituated to the uncertainty of life and health. When my mind is unclouded by melancholy, I consider the temporary distresses of this state of being as 'light afflictions,' by stretching my mental view into that glorious after-existence, when they will appear to be as nothing. But present pleasures and present pains must be felt. I lately read 'Rasselas' over again with satisfaction.

"Since you are desirous to hear about Macquarry's sale, I shall inform you particularly. The gentleman who purchased Ulva is Mr. Campbell of Auchnaba: our friend Macquarry was proprietor of two-thirds of it, of which the rent was 156*l.* 5*s.* 1*d.* This parcel was set up at 4,069*l.* 5*s.* 1*d.* but it sold for no less than 5,540*l.* The other third of Ulva, with the island of Staffa, belonged to Macquarry of Ormaig Its rent, including that of Staffa, 83*l.* 12*s.* 2½*d.*—set up at 2,178*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.*—sold for no less than 3,540*l.* The Laird of Col wished to purchase Ulva, but he thought the price too high. There may, indeed, be great improvements made there, both in fishing and agriculture; but the interest of the purchase-money exceeds the rent so very much, that I doubt if the bargain will be profitable. There is an island called Little Colonsay, of 10*l.* yearly rent, which I am informed has belonged to the Macquarrys of Ulva for many ages, but which was lately claimed by the Presbyterian Synod of Argyll, in consequence of a grant made to them by Queen Anne. It is believed that their claim will be dismissed, and that Little Colonsay will also be sold for the advantage of Macquarry's creditors. What think you of purchasing this island, and endowing a school or college there, the master to be a clergyman of the Church of England? How venerable would such an institution make the name of Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON in the Hebrides! I have, like yourself, a wonderful pleasure in recollecting our travels in those islands. The pleasure is, I think, greater than it reasonably should be, considering that we had not much either of beauty or elegance to charm our imaginations, or of rude novelty to astonish. Let us, by all means, have another expedition. I shrink a little from our scheme of going up the Baltick. I am sorry you have already been in Wales; for I wish to see it. Shall we go to Ireland, of which I have seen but little? We shall try to strike out a plan when we are at Ashbourne.—I am ever your most faithful humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Ashbourne, 11th Sept. 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—I write to be left at Carlisle, as you direct me; but you cannot have it. Your letter, dated Sept. 6th, was not at this place till this day, Thursday, Sept. 11th; and I hope you will be here before this is at Carlisle[1]. However, what you have not going, you may have returning; and as I believe I shall not love you less after our interview, it will then be as true as it is now, that I set a very high value upon your friendship, and count your kindness as one of the chief felicities of my life. Do not fancy that an intermission of writing is a decay of kindness. No man is always in a disposition to write; nor has any man at all times something to say.

[1] It so happened. The letter was forwarded to my house at Edinburgh.—BOSWELL.

"'That distrust which intrudes so often in your mind is a mode of melancholy, which, if it be the business of a wise man to be happy, it is foolish to indulge; and, if it be a duty to preserve our faculties entire for their proper use, it is criminal. Suspicion is very often an useless pain. From that, and all other pains, I wish you free and safe; for I am, dear sir, most affectionately yours, "SAM. JOHNSON."

It appears that Johnson, now in his sixty-eighth year, was seriously inclined to realize the project of our going up the Baltick, which I had started when we were in the Isle of Sky; for he thus writes to Mrs. Thrale:

"Ashbourne, 13th Sept. 1777.

Letters, vol. i. p. 366. "Boswell, I believe, is coming. He talks of being here to-day: I shall be glad to see him: but he shrinks from the Baltick expedition, which, I think, is the best scheme in our power: what we shall substitute, I know not. He wants to see Wales; but, except the woods of *Bachycraigh*, what is there in Wales, that can fill the hunger of ignorance, or quench the thirst of curiosity? We may, perhaps, form some scheme or other; but, in the phrase of *Hockley in the Hole*, it is pity he has not a *better bottom*."

Such an ardour of mind, and vigour of enterprise, is admirable at any age; but more particularly so at the advanced period at which Johnson was then arrived. I am sorry now that I did not insist on our executing that scheme. Besides the other objects of curiosity and observation, to have seen my illustrious friend received, as he probably would have been, by a prince so eminently distinguished for his variety of talents and acquisitions as the late King of Sweden, and by the Empress of Russia, whose extraordinary abilities information, and magnanimity, astonish the world, would have afforded a noble subject for contemplation and record. This reflection may possibly be thought too visionary by the more sedate and cold-blooded part of my readers; yet I own, I frequently indulge it with an earnest, unavailing regret.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. ASTON.

"Ashbourne, 13th Sept. 1777.

Pemb. MS. "DEAR MADAM,—As I left you so much disordered, a fortnight is a long time to be without any account of your health. I am willing to flatter myself that you are better, though you gave me no reason to believe that you intended to use any means for your recovery. Nature often performs wonders, and will, I hope, do for you more than you seem inclined to do for yourself.

"In this weakness of body, with which it has pleased God to visit you, he has given you great cause of thankfulness, by the total exemption of your mind from all effects of your disorder. Your memory is not less comprehensive or distinct, nor your reason less vigorous and acute, nor your imagination less active and sprightly than in any former time of your life. This is a great blessing, as it respects enjoyment of the present; and a blessing yet far greater, as it bestows power and opportunity to prepare for the future.

"All sickness is a summons. But as you do not want exhortations, I will send you only my good wishes, and exhort you to believe the good wishes very sincere, of, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

On Sunday evening, Sept. 14, I arrived at Ashbourne, and drove directly up to Dr. Taylor's door. Dr. Johnson and he appeared before I had got out of the post chaise, and welcomed me cordially.

I told them that I had travelled all the preceding night, and gone to bed at Leek, in Staffordshire; and that when I rose to go to church in the afternoon, I was informed there had been an earthquake, of which, it seems, the shock had been felt in some degree at Ashbourne. JOHNSON. "Sir, it will be much exaggerated in publick talk: for, in the first place, the common people do not accurately adapt their thoughts to the objects; nor, secondly, do they accurately adapt their words to their thoughts: they do not mean to lie; but, taking no pains to be exact, they give you very false accounts. A great part of their language is proverbial. If any thing rocks at all, they say *it rocks like a cradle;* and in this way they go on."

The subject of grief for the loss of relations and friends being introduced, I observed that it was strange to consider how soon it in general wears away. Dr. Taylor mentioned a gentleman of the neighbourhood as the only instance he had ever known of a person who had endeavoured to *retain* grief. He told Dr. Taylor, that after his lady's death, which affected him deeply, he *resolved* that the grief, which he cherished with a kind of sacred fondness, should be lasting; but that he found he could not keep it long. JOHNSON. "All grief for what cannot in the course of nature be helped soon wears away; in some sooner, indeed, in some later; but it never continues very long, unless where there is madness, such as will make a man have pride so fixed in his mind as to imagine himself a king; or any other passion in an unreasonable way: for all unnecessary grief is unwise, and therefore will not be long retained by a sound mind. If, indeed, the

cause of our grief is occasioned by our own misconduct, if grief is mingled with remorse of conscience, it should be lasting." BOSWELL. "But, sir, we do not approve of a man who very soon forgets the loss of a wife or a friend." JOHNSON. "Sir, we disapprove of him, not because he soon forgets his grief, for the sooner it is forgotten the better; but because we suppose, that if he forgets his wife or his friend soon, he has not had much affection for them."

I was somewhat disappointed in finding that the edition of the "English Poets," for which he was to write prefaces and lives, was not an undertaking directed by him, but that he was to furnish a preface and life to any poet the booksellers pleased. I asked him if he would do this to any dunce's works, if they should ask him. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and *say* he was a dunce." My friend seemed now not much to relish talking of this edition.

Letters, vol. i. p. 369. On Monday, September 15, Dr. Johnson [wrote to Mrs. Thrale: "Last night came Boswell. I am glad that he is come, and seems to be very brisk and lively, and laughs a little at —— [1]. I told him something of the scene at Richmond [2]."]

He observed, that every body commended such parts of his "Journey to the Western Islands" as were in their own way. "For instance," said he, "Mr. Jackson (the all-knowing) told me there was more good sense upon trade in it, than he should hear in the house of commons in a year, except from Burke. Jones commended the part which treats of language; Burke that which describes the inhabitants of mountainous countries."

After breakfast, Johnson carried me to see the garden belonging to the school of Ashbourne, which is very prettily formed upon a bank, rising gradually behind the house. The Rev. Mr. Langley, the head-master, accompanied us.

While we sat basking in the sun upon a seat here, I introduced a common subject of complaint, the very small salaries which many curates have; and I maintained, that no man should be invested with the character of a clergyman, unless he has a security for such an income as will enable him to appear respectable; that, therefore, a clergyman should not be allowed to have a curate, unless he gives him a hundred pounds a year; if he cannot do that, let him perform the duty himself. JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir, it is wrong that any clergyman should be without a reasonable income; but as the church revenues were sadly diminished at the reformation, the clergy who have livings cannot afford, in many instances, to give good salaries to curates, without leaving themselves too little; and, if no curate were to be permitted unless he had a hundred pounds a year, their number would be very small, which would be a disadvantage, as then there would not be such choice in the nursery for the church, curates being candidates for the higher ecclesiastical offices, according to their merit and good behaviour." He explained the system of the English hierarchy exceedingly well. "It is not thought fit," said he, "to trust a man with the care of a parish till he has given proof as a curate that he shall deserve such a trust." This is an excellent theory; and if the practice were according to it, the church of England would be admirable indeed However, as I have heard Dr. Johnson observe as to the universities, bad practice does not infer that the constitution is bad.

We had with us at dinner several of Dr. Taylor's neighbours, good civil gentlemen, who seemed to understand Dr. Johnson very well, and not to consider him in the light that a certain person [3] did, who being struck, or rather stunned by his voice and manner, when he was afterwards asked what he thought of him, answered, "He's a tremendous companion."

Johnson told me, that "Taylor was a very sensible acute man, and had a strong mind: that he had great activity in some respects, and yet such a sort of indolence, that if you should put a pebble upon his chimney-piece, you would find it there, in the same state, a year afterwards."

And here is a proper place to give an account of Johnson's humane and zealous interference in behalf of the Reverend Dr. William Dodd, formerly Prebendary of Brecon, and chaplain in ordinary to his majesty; celebrated as a very popular preacher, an encourager of charitable institutions, and authour of a variety of works, chiefly theological. Having unhappily contracted expensive habits of living, partly occasioned by licentiousness of manners, he in an evil hour, when pressed by want of money, and dreading an exposure of his circumstances, forged a bond, of which he attempted to avail himself to support his credit, flattering himself with hopes that he might be able to repay its amount without being detected. The person whose name he thus rashly and criminally presumed to falsify was the Earl

[1] [Probably his host, Dr. Taylor—between whom and Boswell there seems to have been no great cordiality, and it may be suspected that Boswell does not take much power [pains?] to set Dr. Taylor's merits in the best light. He was Johnson's earliest and most constant friend, and read the funeral service over him.—ED.]

[2] [This refers to some occurrence (probably at Sir Joshua's) now forgotten.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. George Garrick.—ED.]

of Chesterfield, to whom he had been tutor, and who he perhaps, in the warmth of his feelings, flattered himself would have generously paid the money in case of an alarm being taken, rather than suffer him to fall a victim to the dreadful consequences of violating the law against forgery, the most dangerous crime in a commercial country: but the unfortunate divine had the mortification to find that he was mistaken. His noble pupil appeared against him, and he was capitally convicted.

Johnson told me that Dr. Dodd was very little acquainted with him, having been but once in his company, many years previous to this period (which was precisely the state of my own acquaintance with Dodd); but in his distress he bethought himself of Johnson's persuasive power of writing, if haply it might avail to obtain for him the royal mercy. He did not apply to him directly, but, extraordinary as it may seem, through the late Countess of Harrington[1], who wrote a letter to Johnson, asking him to employ his pen in favour of Dodd. Mr. Allen, the printer, who was Johnson's landlord and next neighbour in Bolt-court, and for whom he had much kindness, was one of Dodd's friends, of whom, to the credit of humanity be it recorded, that he had many who did not desert him, even after his infringement of the law had reduced him to the state of a man under sentence of death. Mr. Allen told me that he carried Lady Harrington's letter to Johnson, that Johnson read it, walking up and down his chamber, and seemed much agitated, after which he said, "I will do what I can;" and certainly he did make extraordinary exertions.

He this evening, as he had obligingly promised in one of his letters, put into my hands the whole series of his writings upon this melancholy occasion, and I shall present my readers with the abstract which I made from the collection; in doing which I studied to avoid copying what had appeared in print, and now make part of the edition of "Johnson's Works," published by the booksellers of London, but taking care to mark Johnson's variations in some of the pieces there exhibited.

Dr. Johnson wrote, in the first place, Dr. Dodd's "Speech to the Recorder of London," at the Old Bailey, when sentence of death was about to be pronounced upon him.

He wrote also "The Convict's Address to his unhappy Brethren," a sermon deliver ed by Dr. Dodd in the chapel of Newgate According to Johnson's manuscript, it began thus after the text, *What shall I do to be saved*[2]?

"These were the words with which the keeper, to whose custody Paul and Silas were committed by their prosecutors, addressed his prisoners, when he saw them freed from their bonds by the perceptible agency of divine favour, and was, therefore, irresistibly convinced that they were not offenders against the laws, but martyrs to the truth."

Dr. Johnson was so good as to mark for me with his own hand, on a copy of this sermon which is now in my possession, such passages as were added by Dr. Dodd. They are not many: whoever will take the trouble to look at the printed copy, and attend to what I mention, will be satisfied of this.

There is a short introduction by Dr. Dodd, and he also inserted this sentence: "You see with what confusion and dishonour I now stand before you; no more in the pulpit of instruction, but on this humble seat with yourselves." The *notes* are entirely Dodd's own, and Johnson's writing ends at the words, "the thief whom he pardoned on the cross." What follows was supplied by Dr. Dodd himself.

[Dr. Johnson wrote to Mrs. Thrale with some degree of complacency, in Miss Porter's judgment (to whom he had not imparted his transactions with Dodd) Letters 9 Aug. 1777. —"Lucy said, 'When I read Dr. Dodd's sermon to the prisoners, I said, Dr Johnson could not make a better.'"]

The other pieces mentioned by Johnson in the above-mentioned collection are two letters, one to the Lord Chancellor Bathurst (not Lord North, as is erroneously supposed), and one to Lord Mansfield. A Petition from Dr. Dodd to the King. A Petition from Mrs. Dodd to the Queen. Observations of some length inserted in the newspapers, on occasion of Earl Percy's having presented to his majesty a petition for mercy to Dodd, signed by twenty thousand people, but all in vain. He told me that he had also written a petition for the city of London; "but (said he, with a significant smile) they *mended* it[3]."

[1] Caroline, eldest daughter of Charles Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, and wife of William, the second Earl of Harrington.—MALONE. [It may be concluded that Allen not only *carried* the letter, but obtained it; for to those who know the character of Lady Harrington, her *good-nature* will not seem extraordinary; but hat she should have had any kind of acquaintance with Dr. Johnson seems highly improbable.—ED.]

[2] [What *must* I do to be saved?—*Acts*, c. 17, v. 30.—ED.]

[3] Having unexpectedly, by the favour of Mr Stone, of London Field, Hackney, seen the original in Johnson's handwriting of "The Petition of the City of London to his Majesty, in favour of Dr. Dodd," I now present it to my readers, with such passages as were omitted enclosed in crotchets, and the additions or variations marked in italicks

The last of these articles which Johnson wrote is "Dr. Dodd's last solemn Declaration," which he left with the sheriff at the place of execution. Here also my friend marked the variations on a copy of that piece now in my possession. Dodd inserted, "I never knew or attended to the calls of frugality, or the needful minuteness of painful economy;" and in the next sentence he introduced the words which I distinguish by italicks: "My life for some *few unhappy* years past has been *dreadfully erroneous*." Johnson's expression was *hypocritical;* but his remark on the margin is, "With this he said he could not charge himself."

Having thus authentically settled what part of the "Occasional Papers," concerning Dr. Dodd's miserable situation, came from the pen of Johnson, I shall proceed to present my readers with my record of the unpublished writings relating to that extraordinary and interesting matter.

I found a letter to Dr. Johnson from Dr. Dodd, May 23, 1777, in which "The Convict's Address" seems clearly to be meant:

"DR. DODD TO DR. JOHNSON.

"I am so penetrated, my ever dear sir, with a sense of your extreme benevolence towards me, that I cannot find words equal to the sentiments of my heart. * * * * *

"You are too conversant in the world to need the slightest hint from me of what infinite utility the speech [1] on the awful day has been to me. I experience, every hour, some good effect from it. I am sure that effects sti . more salutary and important must follow from *your kind and intended favour.* I will labour—God being my helper—to do justice to it from the pulpit. I am sure, had I your sentiments constantly to deliver from thence, in all their mighty force and power, not a soul could be left unconvinced and unpersuaded. * * * * *

"May God Almighty bless and reward, with his choicest comforts, your philanthropick actions, and enable me at all times to express what I feel of the high and uncommon obligations which I owe to the *first man* in our times."

On Sunday, June 22, he writes, begging Dr. Johnson's assistance in framing a supplicatory letter to his majesty:

"If his majesty could be moved of his royal clemency to spare me and my family the horrours and ignominy of a *publick death*, which the *publick* itself is solicitous to wave, and to grant me in some silent distant corner of the globe to pass the remainder of my days in penitence and prayer, I would bless his clemency and be humbled."

This letter was brought to Dr. Johnson when in church. He stooped down and read it [2], and wrote, when he went home, the following letter for Dr. Dodd to the king:

"SIR,—May it not offend your majesty, that the most miserable of men applies himself to your clemency, as his last hope and his last refuge; that your mercy is most earnestly and humbly implored by a clergyman, whom your laws and judges have condemned to the horrour and ignominy of a publick execution.

"I confess the crime, and own the enormity of its consequences, and the danger of its example. Nor have I the confidence to petition for impunity; but humbly hope that publick security may be established, without the spectacle of a clergyman dragged through the streets, to a death of infamy, amidst the derision of the profligate and profane; and that justice may be satisfied with irrevocable exile, perpetual disgrace, and hopeless penury.

"My life, sir, has not been useless to mankind. I have benefited many. But my offences against God are numberless, and I have had little time for repentance. Preserve me, sir, by your prerogative of mercy, from the necessity of appearing unprepared at that tribunal, before which kings and subjects must stand at last together. Permit me to hide my guilt in

"That William Dodd, Doctor of Laws, now lying under sentence of death *in your majesty's gaol of Newgate* for the crime of forgery, has for a great part of his life set a useful and laudable example of diligence in his calling [and, as we have reason to believe, has exercised his ministry with great fidelity and efficacy], *which, in many instances, has produced the most happy effect.*

"That he has been the first institutor [or] *and* a very earnest and active promoter of several modes of useful charity, and [that], therefore, [he] may be considered as having been on many occasions a benefactor to the publick.

"['That when they consider his past life, they are willing to suppose his late crime to have been, not the consequence of habitual depravity, but the suggestion of some sudden and violent temptation.]

"[That] *your petitioners*, therefore, considering his case as, in some of its circumstances, unprecedented and peculiar, *and encouraged by your majesty's known clemency*, [they] most humbly recommend the said William Dodd to [his] *your* majesty's most gracious consideration, in hopes that he will be found not altogether [unfit] *unworthy* to stand an example of royal mercy."—BOSWELL. [It does seem that these few *alterations* were *amendments*.—ED.]

[1] His speech at the old Bailey when found guilty.—BOSWELL.

[2] [He afterwards expressed a hope that this deviation from the duties of the place would be forgiven him.—ED.]

some obscure corner of a foreign country, where, if I can ever attain confidence to hope that my prayers will be heard, they shall be poured with all the fervour of gratitude for the life and happiness of your majesty.—I am, sir, your majesty's, &c."

Subjoined to it was written as follows:

"DR. JOHNSON TO DR. DODD.

'SIR,—I most seriously enjoin you not to let it be at all known that I have written this letter, and to return the copy to Mr. Allen in a cover to me. I hope I need not tell you that I wish it success. But do not indulge hope. Tell nobody."

It happened luckily that Mr. Allen was pitched on to assist in this melancholy office, for he was a great friend of Mr. Akerman, the keeper of Newgate. Dr. Johnson never went to see Dr. Dodd. He said to me, "It would have done *him* more harm than good to Dodd, who once expressed a desire to see him, but not earnestly."

Dr. Johnson, on the 20th of June, wrote the following letter:

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES JENKINSON.

"SIR,—Since the conviction and condemnation of Dr. Dodd, I have had, by the intervention of a friend, some intercourse with him, and I am sure I shall lose nothing in your opinion by tenderness and commiseration. Whatever be the crime, it is not easy to have any knowledge of the delinquent, without a wish that his life may be spared; at least when no life has been taken away by him. I will, therefore, take the liberty of suggesting some reasons for which I wish this unhappy being to escape the utmost rigour of his sentence.

"He is, so far as I can recollect, the first clergyman of our church who has suffered publick execution for immorality; and I know not whether it would not be more for the interests of religion to bury such an offender in the obscurity of perpetual exile, than to expose him in a cart, and on the gallows, to all who for any reason are enemies to the clergy.

"The supreme power has, in all ages, paid some attention to the voice of the people; and that voice does not least deserve to be heard when it calls out for mercy. There is now a very general desire that Dodd's life should be spared. More is not wished; and, perhaps, this is not too much to be granted.

"If you, sir, have any opportunity of enforcing these reasons, you may, perhaps, think them worthy of consideration: but whatever you determine, I most respectfully entreat that you will be pleased to pardon for this intrusion, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

It has been confidently circulated, with invidious remarks, that to this letter no attention whatever was paid by Mr. Jenkinson (afterwards Earl of Liverpool), and that he did not even deign to show the common civility of owning the receipt of it. I could not but wonder at such conduct in the noble lord, whose own character and just elevation in life, I thought, must have impressed him with all due regard for great abilities and attainments. As the story had been much talked of, and apparently from good authority, I could not but have animadverted upon it in this work, had it been as was alleged; but from my earnest love of truth, and having found reason to think that there might be a mistake, I presumed to write to his lordship, requesting an explanation; and it is with the sincerest pleasure that I am enabled to assure the world that there is no foundation for it, the fact being, that owing to some neglect, or accident, Johnson's letter never came to Lord Liverpool's hands. I should have thought it strange indeed, if that noble lord had undervalued my illustrious friend[1]; but instead of this being the case, his lordship, in the very polite answer with which he was pleased immediately to honour me, thus expresses himself: "I have always respected the memory of Dr. Johnson, and admire his writings; and I frequently read many parts of them with pleasure and great improvement."

All applications for the royal mercy having failed, Dr. Dodd prepared himself for death; and, with a warmth of gratitude, wrote to Dr. Johnson as follows:

"25th June, midnight.

"Accept, thou *great* and *good* heart, my earnest and fervent thanks and prayers for all thy benevolent and kind efforts in my behalf.—Oh! Dr. Johnson! as I sought your knowledge at an early hour in life, would to Heaven I had cultivated the love and acquaintance of so excellent a man!—I pray God most sincerely to bless you with

[1] [It would not be suprising if it had been so treated. Mr. Jenkinson was at this time Secretary at War, and was obnoxious to popular odium from an unfounded imputation of being the channel of a secret influence over the king. To request, therefore, *his* influence with the king on a matter so wholly foreign to his duties and station was a kind of verification of the slander;—and however Lord Liverpool's prudence may have inclined him, at a subsequent period, to answer Mr. Boswell's inquiries, there seems to be some reason why he should have been offended at the liberty taken with him by Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

the highest transports—the infelt satisfaction of *humane* and benevolent exertions! —And admitted, as I trust I shall be, to the realms of bliss before you, I shall hail *your* arrival there with transports, and rejoice to acknowledge that you was my comforter, my advocate, and my *friend!* God *be ever* with *you!*"

Dr. Johnson lastly wrote to Dr. Dodd this solemn and soothing letter:

"TO THE REVEREND DR. DODD.
"26th June, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—That which is appointed to all men is now coming upon you. Outward circumstances, the eyes and the thoughts of men, are below the notice of an immortal being about to stand the trial for eternity, before the Supreme Judge of heaven and earth. Be comforted: your crime, morally or religiously considered, has no very deep dye of turpitude. It corrupted no man's principles; it attacked no man's life. It involved only a temporary and reparable injury. Of this, and of all other sins, you are earnestly to repent; and may God, who knoweth our frailty, and desireth not our death, accept your repentance, for the sake of his son Jesus Christ, our Lord!

"In requital of those well-intended offices which you are pleased so emphatically to acknowledge, let me beg that you make in your devotions one petition for my eternal welfare.—I am, dear sir, your most affectionate servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Under the copy of this letter I found written, in Johnson's own hand, "Next day, June 27, he was executed."

Reyn. Recoll. [That Dr. Johnson should have desired one prayer from Dr. Dodd, who was himself such an atrocious offender, has been very much condemned; but we ought to consider, that Dr. Johnson might, perhaps, have had sufficient reason to believe Dodd to be a sincere penitent, which, indeed, was the case; and, besides, his mind was so softened with pity and compassion for him, so impressed with the awful idea of his situation, the last evening of his life, that he probably did not think of his former transgressions, or thought, perhaps, that he ought not to remember them, when the offender was so soon to appear before the Supreme Judge of heaven and earth.

Dr. Johnson told Miss Reynolds that Dodd, on reading this letter, gave it into the hands of his wife, with a strong injunction never to part with it; that he had slept during the night, and when he awoke in the morning, he did not immediately recollect that he was to suffer, and when he did, he expressed the utmost horrour and agony of mind—outrageously vehement in his speech and in his looks—till he went into the chapel, and on his coming out of it his face expressed the most angelic peace and composure.]

[Johnson was deeply concerned at the failure of the petitions; and asked Sir J. Hawkins at the time, if the request contained in them was not such an one as ought to have been granted to the prayer of twenty three thousand subjects: to which Hawkins answered, that the subscription of popular petitions was a thing of course, and that, therefore, the difference between twenty and twenty thousand names was inconsiderable. He further censured the clergy very severely, for not interposing in his behalf, and said, "that their inactivity arose from a paltry fear of being reproached with partiality towards one of their own order." Hawk. p 529-30.

But although he thus actively assisted in the solicitations for pardon, yet, in his private judgment, he thought Dodd unworthy of it; having been known to say, that had he been the adviser of the king, he should have told him that, in pardoning Dodd, his justice, in consigning the Perreaus[1] to their sentence, would have been called in question.]

To conclude this interesting episode with an useful application, let us now attend to the reflections of Johnson at the end of the "Occasional Papers," concerning the unfortunate Dr. Dodd.

"Such were the last thoughts of a man whom we have seen exulting in popularity and sunk in shame. For his reputation, which no man can give to himself, those who conferred it are to answer. Of his publick ministry the means of judging were sufficiently attainable. He must be allowed to preach well, whose sermons strike his audience with forcible conviction. Of his life, those who thought it consistent with his doctrine did not originally form false notions. He was at first what he endeavoured to make others; but the world broke down his resolution, and he in time ceased to exemplify his own instructions.

"Let those who are tempted to his faults tremble at his punishment; and those whom he impressed from the pulpit with religious sentiments endeavour to confirm them, by considering the regret and self-abhorrence with which he reviewed in prison his deviations from rectitude[2]."

Johnson gave us this evening, in his happy discriminative manner, a portrait of the late Mr. Fitzherbert[3] of Derbyshire.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 38.—ED.]

[2] See Dr. Johnson's final opinion concerning Dr. Dodd, *sub* April 18, 1783.—MALONE.

[3] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 29, and 407, *n.*—ED.]

"There was," said he, "no sparkle, no brilliancy in Fitzherbert; but I never knew a man who was so generally acceptable. He made every body quite easy, overpowered nobody by the superiority of his talents, made no man think worse of himself by being his rival, seemed always to listen, did not oblige you to hear much from him, and did not oppose what you said. Every body liked him; but he had no *friends*, as I understand the word, nobody with whom he exchanged intimate thoughts. People were willing to think well of every thing about him. A gentleman was making an affecting rant, as many people do, of great feelings about 'his dear son,' who was at school near London; how anxious he was lest he might be ill, and what he would give to see him. 'Can't you,' said Fitzherbert, 'take a post-chaise and go to him?' This, to be sure, *finished* the affected man, but there was not much in it[1]. However, this was circulated as wit for a whole winter, and I believe part of a summer too; a proof that he was no very witty man. He was an instance of the truth of the observation, that a man will please more upon the whole by negative qualities than by positive; by never offending, than by giving a great deal of delight. In the first place, men hate more steadily than they love; and if I have said something to hurt a man once, I shall not get the better of this by saying many things to please him." [Of Mrs. Fitzherbert[2] he always spoke with esteem and tenderness, and with a veneration very difficult to deserve. "That woman," said he, "loved her husband as we hope and desire to be loved by our guardian angel. Fitzherbert was a gay, good-humoured fellow, generous of his money and of his meat, and desirous of nothing but good, cheerful society among people distinguished in *some* way—in *any way*, I think; for Rousseau and St. Austin would have been equally welcome to his table and to his kindness. The lady, however, was of another way of thinking: her first care was to preserve her husband's soul from corruption; her second to keep his estate entire for their children: and I owed my good reception in the family to the idea she had entertained, that I was fit company for Fitzherbert whom I loved extremely. 'They dare not,' said she, 'swear, and take other conversation-liberties, before *you*.'" Mrs. Piozzi asked if her husband returned her regard. "He felt her influence too powerfully," replied Dr. Johnson: "no man will be fond of what forces him daily to feel himself inferior. She stood at the door of her paradise in Derbyshire, like the angel with the flaming sword, to keep the devil at a distance. But she was not immortal, poor dear! she died, and her husband felt at once afflicted and released." Mrs. Piozzi inquired if she was handsome. "She would have been handsome for a queen," replied the panegyrist: "her beauty had more in it of majesty than of attraction, more of the dignity of virtue than the vivacity of wit." The friend of this lady, Miss Boothby, succeeded her in the management of Mr. Fitzherbert's family, and in the esteem of Dr. Johnson; "Though," he said, "she pushed her piety to bigotry, her devotion to enthusiasm; that she somewhat disqualified herself for the duties of *this* life by her perpetual aspirations after the *next*:" such was, however, the purity of her mind, he said, and such the graces of her manner, that Lord Lyttelton and he used to strive for her preference with an emulation that occasioned hourly disgust, and ended in lasting animosity. "You may see," said he to Mrs. Piozzi when the Poets' Lives were printed, "that dear Boothby is at my heart still. She *would* delight in that fellow Lyttelton's company in spite of all that I could do; and I cannot forgive even his memory the preference given by a mind like hers." Mrs. Piozzi heard Baretti say, that when this lady died, Dr. Johnson was almost distracted with his grief; and that the friends about him had much ado to calm the violence of his emotions[3].]

Piozzi, p. 122.

Tuesday, September 16, Dr. Johnson having mentioned to me the extraordinary size and price of some cattle reared by Dr. Taylor, I rode out with our host, surveyed his farm, and was shown one cow which he had sold for a hundred and twenty guineas, and another for which he had been offered a hundred and thirty. Taylor thus described to me his old school-fellow and friend, Johnson: "He is a man of a very clear head, great power of words, and a very

[1] Dr. Gisborne, physician to his majesty's household, has obligingly communicated to me a fuller account of this story than had reached Dr. Johnson. The affected gentleman was the late John Gilbert Cooper, Esq. authour of a Life of Socrates, and of some poems in Dodsley's collection. Mr. Fitzherbert found him one morning, apparently, in such violent agitation, on account of the indisposition of his son, as to seem beyond the power of comfort. At length, however, he exclaimed, "I 'll write an elegy." Mr. Fitzherbert, being satisfied by this of the sincerity of his emotions, slily said, "Had not you better take a post-chaise, and go and see him?" It was the shrewdness of the insinuation which made the story be circulated.—BOSWELL.

[2] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 29.—ED.]

[3] [See, on the subject of Miss Boothby, *ante*, vol. i. p. 29, and *post*, the note on the account of the Life of Lyttelton, *sub* 1781, where the attachment between her and Dr. Johnson is more fully explained. See also the General Appendix, where a selection of the lady's letters and all Dr. Johnson's to her are given.—ED.]

gay imagination; but there is no disputing with him. He will not hear you, and, having a louder voice than you, must roar you down."

In the afternoon I tried to get Dr. Johnson to like the Poems of Mr. Hamilton of Bangour [1], which I had brought with me. I had been much pleased with them at a very early age: the impression still remained on my mind; it was confirmed by the opinion of my friend the Honourable Andrew Erskine, himself both a good poet and a good critick, who thought Hamilton as true a poet as ever wrote, and that his not having fame was unaccountable. Johnson, upon repeated occasions, while I was at Ashbourne, talked slightingly of Hamilton. He said there was no power of thinking in his verses, nothing that strikes one, nothing better than what you generally find in magazines; and that the highest praise they deserved was, that they were very well for a gentleman to hand about among his friends. He said the imitation of *Ne sit ancillæ tibi amor*, &c. was too solemn: he read part of it at the beginning. He read the beautiful pathetick song, "Ah, the poor shepherd's mournful fate," and did not seem to give attention to what I had been used to think tender elegant strains, but laughed at the rhyme, in Scotch pronunciation, *wishes* and *blushes*, reading *wushes*—and there he stopped. He owned that the epitaph on Lord Newhall was pretty well done. He read the "Inscription in a Summer-house," and a little of the Imitations of Horace's Epistles; but said he found nothing to make him desire to read on. When I urged that there were some good poetical passages in the book, "Where," said he, "will you find so large a collection without some?" I thought the description of Winter might obtain his approbation:

"See Winter, from the frozen north,
Drives his iron chariot forth!
His grisly hand in icy chains
Fair Tweeda's silver flood constrains," &c.

He asked why an "*iron* chariot?" and said "icy chains" was an old image. I was struck with the uncertainty of taste, and somewhat sorry that a poet whom I had long read with fondness was not approved by Dr. Johnson. I comforted myself with thinking that the beauties were too delicate for his robust perceptions. Garrick maintained that he had not a taste for the finest productions of genius: but I was sensible, that when he took the trouble to analyse critically, he generally convinced us that he was right.

In the evening the Reverend Mr. Seward, of Lichfield, who was passing through Ashbourne in his way home, drank tea with us. Johnson described him thus: "Sir, his ambition is to be a fine talker; so he goes to Buxton, and such places, where he may find companies to listen to him. And, sir, he is a valetudinarian, one of those who are always mending themselves. I do not know a more disagreeable character than a valetudinarian, who thinks he may do any thing that is for his ease [2], and indulges himself in the grossest freedoms: sir, he brings himself to the state of a hog in a sty."

Dr. Taylor's nose happening to bleed, he said it was because he had omitted to have himself blooded four days after a quarter of a year's interval. Dr. Johnson, who was a great dabbler in physick, disapproved much of periodical bleeding. "For," said he, "you accustom yourself to an evacuation which nature cannot perform of herself, and therefore she cannot help you, should you from forgetfulness or any other cause omit it; so you may be suddenly suffocated. You may accustom yourself to other periodical evacuations, because, should you omit them, nature can supply the omission; but nature cannot open a vein to blood you [3]." "I do not like to take an emetick," said Taylor, "for fear of breaking some small vessels." "Poh!" said Johnson, "if you have so many things that will break, you had better break your neck at once, and there 's an end on 't. You will break no small vessels" (blowing with high derision). [Though Dr. Johnson was commonly affected even to agony at the thoughts of a friend's dying, he troubled himself very little with the complaints they might make to him about ill health. "Dear Doctor," said he one day to a common acquaintance [4], who lamented the tender state of his *inside*, "do not be like the spider, and spin conversation thus incessantly out of thy own bowels."] Piozzi, p. 144.

I mentioned to Dr. Johnson, that David Hume's persisting in his infidelity when he was dying shocked me much. JOHNSON. "Why should it shock you, sir? Hume owned he had never read the New Testament with attention. Here then was a man who had been at no pains to inquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the prospect of death would alter his way of thinking, unless God should send an angel to set him right." I said I had reason to believe that the thought of annihilation gave Hume no pain. JOHNSON. "It was not so, sir.

[1] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 334.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 49, 27th March, 1776.—ED.]

[3] [Nature, however, may supply the evacuation by an hemorrhage.—KEARNEY.]

[4] [Dr. Delap of Lewes. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 222; but it is there incorrectly stated that he was *rector of Lewes*; he only resided there.—ED.]

He had a vanity in being thought easy. It is more probable that he should assume an appearance of ease, than that so very improbable a thing should be, as a man not afraid of going (as, in spite of his delusive theory, he cannot be sure but he may go) into an unknown state, and not being uneasy at leaving all he knew. And you are to consider, that upon his own principle of annihilation he had no motive to speak the truth." [He would never hear Hume mentioned with any temper. "A man," said he, "who endeavoured to persuade his friend, who had the stone, to shoot himself!"] The horrour of death, which I had always observed in Dr. Johnson, appeared strong to-night. I ventured to tell him, that I had been, for moments in my life, not afraid of death; therefore I could suppose another man in that state of mind for a considerable space of time. He said, "he never had a moment in which death was not terrible to him." He added, that it had been observed, that scarce any man dies in publick but with apparent resolution; from that desire of praise which never quits us. I said, Dr. Dodd seemed to be willing to die, and full of hopes of happiness, "Sir," said he, "Dr. Dodd would have given both his hands and both his legs to have lived. The better a man is, the more afraid is he of death, having a clearer view of infinite purity." He owned, that our being in an unhappy uncertainty as to our salvation was mysterious; and said, "Ah! we must wait till we are in another state of being to have many things explained to us." Even the powerful mind of Johnson seemed foiled by futurity. But I thought, that the gloom of uncertainty in solemn religious speculation, being mingled with hope, was yet more consolatory than the emptiness of infidelity. A man can live in thick air, but perishes in an exhausted receiver.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 205.

Dr. Johnson was much pleased with a remark which I told him was made to me by General Paoli: "That it is impossible not to be afraid of death; and that those who at the time of dying are not afraid, are not thinking of death, but of applause, or something else, which keeps death out of their sight: so that all men are equally afraid of death when they see it; only some have a power of turning their sight away from it better than others."

On Wednesday, September 17, Dr. Butter, physician at Derby, drank tea with us; and it was settled that Dr. Johnson and I should go on Friday and dine with him. Johnson said, "I am glad of this." He seemed weary of the uniformity of life at Dr. Taylor's.

Talking of biography, I said, in writing a life, a man's peculiarities should be mentioned, because they mark his character. JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no doubt as to peculiarities: the question is, whether a man's vices should be mentioned; for instance, whether it should be mentioned that Addison and Parnell drank too freely; for people will probably more easily indulge in drinking from knowing this; so that more ill may be done by the example, than good by telling the whole truth." Here was an instance of his varying from himself in talk; for when Lord Hailes and he sat one morning calmly conversing in my house at Edinburgh, I well remember that Dr. Johnson maintained, that "If a man is to write a *Panegyrick*, he may keep vices out of sight; but if he professes to write a *Life*, he must represent it really as it was:" and when I objected to the danger of telling that Parnell drank to excess, he said, that "it would produce an instructive caution to avoid drinking, when it was seen, that even the learning and genius of Parnell could be debased by it." And in the Hebrides he maintained, as appears from the "Journal[1]," that a man's intimate friend should mention his faults, if he writes his life.

[On another occasion, when accused of mentioning ridiculous anecdotes in the "Lives of the Poets," he said, he should not have been an exact biographer if he had omitted them. "The business of such a one," said he, "is to give a complete account of the person whose life he is writing, and to discriminate him from all other persons by any peculiarities of character or sentiment he may happen to have."] Hawk. Apoph. p. 198

He had this evening, partly, I suppose, from the spirit of contradiction to his whig friend, a violent argument with Dr. Taylor, as to the inclinations of the people of England at this time towards the Royal Family of Stuart. He grew so outrageous as to say, "that if England were fairly polled, the present king would be sent away to-night, and his adherents hanged to-morrow." Taylor, who was as violent a whig as Johnson was a tory, was roused by this to a pitch of bellowing. He denied loudly what Johnson said; and maintained that there was an abhorrence against the Stuart family, though he admitted that the people were not much attached to the present king[2]. JOHNSON. "Sir, the state of the

[1] *Ante*, vol. i. p. 403, 22d Sept. 1773.—BOSWELL.

[2] Dr. Taylor was very ready to make this admission, because the party with which he was connected was not in power. There was then some truth in it, owing to the pertinacity of factious clamour. Had he lived till now, it would have been impossible for him to deny that his majesty possesses the warmest affection of his people.—BOSWELL.

country is this: the people, knowing it to be agreed on all hands tha. this king has not the hereditary right to the crown, and .here being no hope that he who has it can be restored, have grown cold and indifferent upon the subject of loyalty, and have no warm attachment to any king. They would not, therefore, risk any thing to restore the exiled family. They would not give twenty shillings a-piece to bring it about. But if a mere vote could do it, there would be twenty to one; at least there would be a very great majority of voices for it. For, sir, you are to consider, that all those who think a king has a right to his crown as a man has to his estate, which is the just opinion, would be for restoring the king who certainly has the hereditary right, could he be trusted with it; in which there would be no danger now, when laws and every thing else are so much advanced: and every king will govern by the laws. And you must also consider, sir, that there is nothing on the other side to oppose to this: for it is not alleged by any one that the present family has any inherent right: so that the whigs could not have a contest between two rights."

Dr. Taylor admitted, that if the question as to hereditary right were to be tried by a poll of the people of England, to be sure the abstract doctrine would be given in favour of the family of Stuart; but he said, the conduct of that family, which occasioned their expulsion, was so fresh in the minds of the people, that they would not vote for a restoration Dr. Johnson, I think, was contented with the admission as to the hereditary right, leaving the original point in dispute, viz. what the people upon the whole would do, taking in right and affection; for he said, people were afraid of a change, even though they think it right. Dr. Taylor said something of the slight foundation of the hereditary right of the house of Stuart. "Sir," said Johnson, "the house of Stuart succeeded to the full right of both the houses of York and Lancaster, whose common source had the undisputed right. A right to a throne is like a right to any thing else. Possession is sufficient, where no better right can be shown. This was the case with the Royal Family of England, as it is now with the King of France: for as to the first beginning of the right we are in the dark."

Ed. [But though thus a tory, and almost a *jacobite*, Dr. Johnson was not so besotted in his notions, as to abet what is called the patriarchial scheme, as delineated by Sir Robert Filmer and other writers on government; nor, with others of a more sober cast, to acquiesce in the opinion that, because submission to governors is, in general terms, inculcated in the Holy Scriptures, the resistance of tyranny and oppression is, in all cases, unlawful: he seemed rather to adopt the sentiments of Hooker on the subject, as explained by Hoadly, and, by consequence, to look on submission to lawful authority as a moral obligation; he, therefore, condemned the conduct of James the Second during his short reign; and, had he been a subject on that weak and infatuated monarch, would, Sir John Hawkins was persuaded, have resisted any invasion of his right, or unwarrantable exertion of power, with the same spirit as did the president and fellows of Magdalen college, or those conscientious divines the seven bishops. This disposition, as it leads to whiggism, one would have thought, might have reconciled him to the memory of James's successor, whose exercise of the regal authority among us merited better returns than were made him; but, it had no such effect: he never spoke of King William but in terms of reproach, and, in his opinion of him, seemed to adopt all the prejudices of jacobite bigotry and rancour. He, however, was not so unjust to the minister who most essentially contributed to the establishment of the reigning family. Of Sir Robert Walpole, notwithstanding that he had written against him in the early part of his life, he had a high opinion: he said of him, that he was a fine fellow, and that his enemies deemed him so before his death: he honoured his memory for having kept this country in peace many years, as also for the goodness and placability of his temper; of which Pulteney, earl of Bath, thought so highly, that, in a conversation with Johnson, he said, that Sir Robert was of a temper so calm and equal, and so hard to be provoked, that he was very sure he never felt the bitterest invectives against him for half an hour. To the same purpose Johnson related the following anecdote, which he said he had from Lord North: Sir Robert having got into his hands some treasonable letters of his inveterate enemy, Will. Shippen, one of the heads of the jacobite faction, he sent for him, and burned them before his face Some time afterwards, Shippen had occasion to take the oaths to the government in the house of commons, which, while he was doing, Sir Robert, who stood next him, and knew his principles to be the same as ever, smiled: "Egad, Robin," said Shippen, who had observed him, "that 's hardly fair."

Hawk. p. 504. p. 514. 515.

To party opposition Dr. Johnson ever expressed great aversion; and, of the pretences of *patriots*, always spoke with indignation and contempt. He partook of the short-lived joy that infatuated the public, when Sir Robert Walpole ceased to have the direction of the national councils, and trusted to the professions of

Hawk. p. 506–7

Mr. Pulteney and his adherents, who called themselves the country-party, that all elections should thenceforward be free and uninfluenced, and that bribery and corruption, which were never practised but by courtiers and their agents, should be no more. A few weeks, nay, a few days, convinced Johnson, and indeed all England, that what had assumed the appearance of patriotism, was personal hatred and inveterate malice in some, and in others, an ambition for that power, which, when they had got it, they knew not how to exercise. A change of men, and in some respect of measures, took place: Mr. Pulteney's ambition was gratified by a peerage; the wants of his associates were relieved by places, and seats at the public boards; and, in a short time, the stream of government resumed its former channel, and ran with a current as even as it had ever done.

Upon this developement of the motives, the views, and the consistency of the abovementioned band of *patriots*, Johnson once remarked to me, that it had given more strength to government than all that had been written in its defence, meaning thereby, that it had destroyed all confidence in men of that character.]

Thursday, Sept. 18. Last night Dr. Johnson had proposed that the crystal lustre, or chandelier, in Dr. Taylor's large room, should be lighted up some time or other. Taylor said it should be lighted up next night. "That will do very well," said I, "for it is Dr. Johnson's birthday." When we were in the Isle of Sky, Johnson had desired me not to mention his birthday. He did not seem pleased at this time that I mentioned it, and said (somewhat sternly), "he would *not* have the lustre lighted the next day."

Some ladies, who had been present yesterday when I mentioned his birthday, came to dinner to-day, and plagued him unintentionally by wishing him joy. I know not why he disliked having his birthday mentioned, unless it were that it reminded him of his approaching nearer to death; of which he had a constant dread.

ED. [His letter of this date to Mrs. Thrale confirms this conjecture.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Ashbourne, 18th Sept. 1777.

Letters, vol. i. p. 370. "Here is another birthday. They come very fast. I am now sixty-eight. To lament the past is vain; what remains is to look for hope in futurity.

"Boswell is with us in good humour, and plays his part with his usual vivacity. We are to go in the doctor's vehicle and dine at Derby to-morrow.

"Do you know any thing of Bolt-court? Invite Mr. Levett to dinner, and make inquiry what family he has, and how they proceed. I had a letter lately from Mrs. Williams; Dr. Lewis visits her, and has added ipecacuanha to her bark: but I do not hear much of her amendment. Age is a very stubborn disease. Yet Levett sleeps sound every night. I am sorry for poor Seward's pain, but he may live to be better.

"Mr. [Middleton's [1]] erection of an urn looks like an intention to bury me alive: I would as willingly see my friend, however benevolent and hospitable, quietly inurned. Let him think for the present of some more acceptable memorial."]

I mentioned to him a friend of mine who was formerly gloomy from low spirits, and much distressed by the fear of death, but was now uniformly placid, and contemplated his dissolution without any perturbation. "Sir," said Johnson, "this is only a disordered imagination taking a different turn."

We talked of a collection being made of all the English poets who had published a volume of poems. Johnson told me, "that a Mr. Coxeter [2], whom he knew, had gone the greatest length towards this; having collected, I think, about five hundred volumes of poets whose works were little known; but that upon his death Tom Osborne bought them, and they were dispersed, which he thought a pity, as it was curious to see any series complete; and in every volume of poems something good may be found."

He observed, that a gentleman of eminence in literature had got into a bad style of poetry of late. "He puts," said he, "a very common thing in a strange dress, till he does not know it himself, and thinks other people do not know it." BOSWELL. "That is owing to his being so much versant in old English poetry." JOHNSON. "What is that to the purpose, sir? If I say a man is drunk, and you tell me it is owing to his taking much drink, the matter is not mended. No, sir, ——— [3] has taken to an odd mode. For example, he 'd write thus

'Hermit hoar, in solemn cell,
Wearing out life's evening gray.'

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 490.—ED.]

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 222.—ED.]

[3] [This has been generally supposed to have been Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore; but the truth is that Thomas Warton is meant, and the parodies were intended to ridicule the style of his poems published in 1777. The first lines of two of his best known odes are marked with that kind of *inversion* which Johnson laughed at in "*her mit hoar*" and "*evening gray*."

Gray evening is common enough; but *evening gray* he 'd think fine.—Stay;—we 'll make out the stanza:

'Hermit hoar, in solemn cell,
Wearing out life's evening gray
Smite thy bosom, sage, and tell,
What is bliss? and which the way?' "

BOSWELL. "But why smite his bosom, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why to show he was in earnest," (smiling). He at an after period added the following stanza:

"Thus I spoke; and speaking sigh'd;
—Scarce repress'd the starting tear;—
When the smiling sage replied—
—Come, my lad, and drink some beer [1]."

I cannot help thinking the first stanza very good solemn poetry, as also the first three lines of the second. Its last line is an excellent burlesque surprise on gloomy sentimental inquiries. And, perhaps, the advice is as good as can be given to a low-spirited dissatisfied being:—"Do n't trouble your head with sickly thinking: take a cup, and be merry."

Piozzi, p. 49-52.

[He had on the first appearance of Warton's poems in this year indulged himself in a similar strain of ridicule. "[Warton's] verses are come out," said Mrs. Thrale: "Yes," replied Johnson, "and this frost has struck them in again. Here are some lines I have written to ridicule them: but remember that I love the fellow dearly,—for all I laugh at him.

'Wheresoe'er I turn my view,
All is strange, yet nothing new:
Endless labour all along,
Endless labour to be wrong:
Phrase that Time has flung away;
Uncouth words in disarray,
Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
Ode, and elegy, and sonnet [2].' "

When he parodied the verses of another eminent writer [3], it was done with more provocation, and with some merry malice A serious translation of the same lines, from Euripides, may be found in Burney's History of Music. Here are the burlesque ones:

"Err shall they not, who resolute explore
Time's gloomy backward with judicious eyes;
And scanning right the practices of yore,
Shall deem our hoar progenitors unwise.

"They to the dome where smoke with curling play
Announced the dinner to the regions round,
Summon'd the singer blithe, and harper gay,
And aided wine with dulcet-streaming sound

"The better use of notes, or sweet or shrill,
By quiv'ring string, or modulated wind;
Trumpet or lyre—to their arch bosoms chill,
Admission ne'er had sought, or could not find.

"Oh! send them to the sullen mansions dun,
Her baleful eyes where Sorrow rolls around;
Where gloom-enamour'd Mischief loves to dwell,
And Murder, all blood-bolter'd, schemes the wound.

"When cates luxuriant pile the spacious dish,
And purple nectar glads the festive hour;
The guest, without a want, without a wish,
Can yield no room to Music's soothing power."

Some of the old legendary stories put in verse by modern writers [4] provoked him to caricature them thus one day at Streatham; but they are already well known.

"The tender infant, meek and mild,
Fell down upon the stone;
The nurse took up the squealing child,
But still the child squeal'd on."

A famous ballad also, beginning *Rio verde, Rio verde*, when Mrs. Piozzi commended the translation of it [5], he said he could do it better himself—as thus:

"Evening spreads his *mantle hoar*,"

and

"Beneath the beech whose *branches bare*."
(*T. Warton's Works*, v. i. pp. 130, 146.)

But there is no other point of resemblance that the editor can discover.—ED.]

[1] As some of my readers may be gratified by reading the progress of this little composition, I shall insert it from my notes. "When Dr. Johnson and I were sitting *tête-à-tête* at the Mitre tavern, May 9, 1778, he said, '*Where* is bliss,' would be better. He then added a ludicrous stanza, but would not repeat it, lest I should take it down. It was somewhat as follows; the last line I am sure I remember:

'While I thus cried,
The hoary seer,
Replied,
Come, my lad, and drink some beer.'

'In spring, 1779, when in better humour, he made the second stanza, as in the text. There was only one variation afterwards made on my suggestion, which was changing *hoary* in the third line to *smiling*, both to avoid a sameness with the epithet in the first line, and to describe the hermit in his pleasantry. He was then very well pleased that I should preserve it."—BOSWELL.

[2] [The *metre* of these lines was no doubt suggested by Warton's "Crusade" and "The Grave of King Arthur," (*Works*, v. ii. pp. 38, 51); but they are, otherwise, rather a criticism than a parody.—ED.]

[3] [Malone's MS. notes, communicated by Mr Markland, state that this was "Robert Potter, the translator of Æschylus and Euripides, who wrote a pamphlet against Johnson, in consequence of his criticism on Gray." It may, therefore, be presumed that these verses were made subsequently to that publication, in 1783. Potter died, a prebendary of Norwich, in 1804, æt. eighty-three.—ED.]

[4] [*This* alludes to Bishop Percy and his "Hermit of Warkworth."—ED.]

[5] [No doubt the translation by Bishop Percy:

'Gentle river, gentle river,
Lo thy streams are stain'd with gore,

'Glassy water, glassy water,
Down whose current, clear and strong,
Chiefs confused in mutual slaughter,
Moor and Christian roll along.'

"But, sir," said she, "this is not ridiculous at all." "Why no," replied he, "why should I always write ridiculously? perhaps because I made those verses to imitate [Warton][1]."

Mrs. Piozzi gives another comical instance of caricatura imitation. Some one praising these verses of Lopez de Vega,

"Se acquien los leones vence
Vence una muger hermosa,
O el de flaco averguençe
O ella di ser mas furiosa,"

more than he thought they deserved, Dr. Johnson instantly observed, "that they were founded on a trivial conceit; and that conceit ill-explained, and ill-expressed beside. The lady, we all know, does not conquer in the same manner as the lion does: 't is a mere play of words," added he, "and you might as well say, that

'If the man who turnipscries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'T is a proof that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father.'"

And this humour is of the same sort with which he answered the friend who commended the following line:

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

"To be sure," said Dr. Johnson,

"Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

This readiness of finding a parallel, or making one, was shown by him perpetually in the course of conversation. When the French verses of a certain pantomime were quoted thus,

"Je suis Cassandre descendue des cieux,
Pour vous faire entendre, mesdames et messieurs,
Que je suis Cassandre descendue des cieux;"

he cried out gaily and suddenly, almost in a moment,

"I am Cassandra come down from the sky,
To tell each by-stander what none can deny,
That I am Cassandra come down from the sky."

The pretty Italian verses too, at the end of Baretti's book, called "Easy Phraseology," he did *all' improviso*, in the same manner:

"Viva! viva la padrona!
Tutta bella, e tutta buona,
La padrona e un angiolella
Tutta buona e tutta bella;
Tutta bella e tutta buona
Viva! viva la padrona!";

"Long may live my lovely Hetty!
Always young and always pretty,
Always pretty, always young,
Live my lovely Hetty long!
Always young and always pretty;
Long may live my lovely Hetty[2]!"

The famous distich too, of an Italian *improvisatore*, who, when the Duke of Modena ran away from the comet in the year 1742 or 1743,

"Se al venir vestro i principi sen' vanno
Deh venga ogni di—durate un anno;"

"which," said he, "would do just as wel in our language thus:

'If at your coming princes disappear,
Comets! come every day—and stay a year.'"

When some one in company commended the verses of M. de Benserade *à son Lit:*

"Theatre des ris et des pleurs,
Lit! ou je nais, et ou je meurs,
Tu nous fais voir comment voisins,
Sont nos plaisirs, et nos chagrins."

To which he replied without hesitating,

"In bed we laugh, in bed we cry,
And born in bed, in bed we die;
The near approach a bed may show
Of human bliss to human woe."]

Friday, September 19, after breakfast, Dr. Johnson and I set out in Dr. Taylor's chaise to go to Derby. The day was fine, and we resolved to go by Keddlestone, the seat of Lord Scarsdale, that I might see his lordship's fine house. I was struck with the magnificence of the building; and the extensive park, with the finest verdure, covered with deer, and cattle, and sheep, delighted me. The number of old oaks, of an immense size, filled me with a sort of respectful admiration; for one of them sixty pounds was offered. The excellent smooth gravel roads; the large piece of water formed by his lordship from some small brooks, with a handsome barge upon it; the venerable Gothick church, now the family chapel, just by the house; in short, the grand group of objects agitated and distended my mind in a most agreeable manner. "One should think," said I, "that the proprietor of all this *must* be happy." "Nay, sir," said Johnson, "all this excludes but one evil poverty[3]."

Many a brave and noble captain
Floats along thy willow'd shore."

Neither of these pretended translations give any idea of the peculiar simplicity of the original.—Ed.]

[1] [Mrs. Piozzi had here added the verses cited by Boswell, "*Hermit hoar*," exactly as he has given them; which is remarkable, because her book appeared so long before his.—Ed.]

[2] [The reader will recollect that Mrs. Thrale's name was *Hester*.—Ed.]

[3] When I mentioned Dr. Johnson's remark to a lady of admirable good sense and quickness of understanding, she observed, "It is true all this excludes only one evil; but how much good does it let in!"—*First edition.* To this observation much praise has been justly given. Let me then now do myself the honour to mention that the

Our names were sent up, and a well-drest elderly housekeeper, a most distinct articulator, showed us the house; which I need not describe, as there is an account of it published in "Adams's Works in Architecture." Dr. Johnson thought better of it to-day, than when he saw it before[1]; for he had lately attacked it violently, saying, "It would do excellently for a town-hall. The large room with the pillars," said he, "would do for the judges to sit in at the assizes; the circular room for a jury-chamber; and the room above for prisoners" Still he thought the large room ill lighted, and of no use but for dancing in; and the bed-chambers but indifferent rooms; and that the immense sum which it cost was injudiciously laid out. Dr. Taylor had put him in mind of his *appearing* pleased with the house. "But," said he, "that was when Lord Scarsdale was present. Politeness obliges us to appear pleased with a man's works when he is present. No man will be so ill-bred as to question you. You may therefore pay compliments without saying what is not true. I should say to Lord Scarsdale of his large room, 'My lord, this is the most *costly* room that I ever saw;' which is true."

Dr. Manningham, physician in London, who was visiting at Lord Scarsdale's, accompanied us through many of the rooms; and soon afterwards my lord himself, to whom Dr. Johnson was known, appeared, and did the honours of the house. We talked of Mr. Langton. Johnson, with a warm vehemence of affectionate regard, exclaimed, "The earth does not bear a worthier man than Bennet Langton." We saw a good many fine pictures, which I think are described in one of "Young's Tours." There is a printed catalogue of them, which the housekeeper put into my hand. I should like to view them at leisure. I was much struck with Daniel interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, by Rembrandt. We were shown a pretty large library. In his lordship's dressing-room lay Johnson's small dictionary: he showed it to me, with some eagerness, saying, "Look 'ye! *Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris.*" He observed, also, Goldsmith's "Animated Nature;" and said, "Here 's our friend! The poor doctor would have been happy to hear of this."

In our way, Johnson strongly expressed his love of driving fast in a post-chaise[2]. "If," said he, "I had no duties, and no reference to futurity, I would spend my life in driving briskly in a post-chaise with a pretty woman; but she should be one who could understand me, and would add something to the conversation." I observed, that we were this day to stop just where the Highland army did in 1745. JOHNSON. "It was a noble attempt." BOSWELL. "I wish we could have an authentick history of it." JOHNSON. "If you were not an idle dog you might write it, by collecting from every body what they can tell, and putting down your authorities." BOSWELL. "But I could not have the advantage of it in my life-time." JOHNSON. "You might have the satisfaction of its fame, by printing it in Holland; and as to profit, consider how long it was before writing came to be considered in a pecuniary view. Baretti says he is the first man that ever received copy-money in Italy." I said that I would endeavour to do what Dr. Johnson suggested; and I thought that I might write so as to venture to publish my "History of the Civil War in Great Britain in 1745 and 1746," without being obliged to go to a foreign press[3].

When we arrived at Derby, Dr. Butter accompanied us to see the manufactory of china there. I admired the ingenuity and delicate art with which a man fashioned clay into a cup, a saucer, or a tea-pot, while a boy turned round a wheel to give the mass rotundity. I thought this as excellent in its species of power, as making good verses in its species. Yet I had no respect for this potter. Neither, indeed, has a man of any extent of thinking for a mere verse-maker, in whose numbers, however perfect, there is no poetry, no mind. The china was beautiful, but Dr. Johnson justly observed it was too dear; for that he could have vessels of silver, of the same size, as cheap as what were here made of porcelain[4].

I felt a pleasure in walking about Derby, such as I always have in walking about any town to which I am not accustomed. There is an immediate sensation of novelty; and one speculates on the way in which life is passed in it, which, although there is a sameness every where upon the whole,

lady who made it was the late Margaret Montgomerie, my very valuable wife, and the very affectionate mother of my children, who, if they inherit her good qualities, will have no reason to complain of their lot. *Dos magna parentum virtus.*—*Second edition.*—BOSWELL.

[1] [See *ante*, Tour in Wales, vol. i. p. 480.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 39, and p. 50.—ED.]

[3] I am now happy to understand that Mr. John Home, who was himself gallantly in the field for the reigning family in that interesting warfare, but is generous enough to do justice to the other side, is preparing an account of it for the press.—BOSWELL.

[4] [The editor was once present when a flower-pot of *Sève* china, of about the size that would hold a pint of water, was sold by auction for 70*l*.—ED.]

is yet minutely diversified. The minute diversities in every thing are wonderful. Talking of shaving the other night at Dr. Taylor's, Dr. Johnson said, "Sir, of a thousand shavers, two do not shave so much alike as not to be distinguished." I thought this not possible, till he specified so many of the varieties in shaving;—holding the razor more or less perpendicular;—drawing long or short strokes;—beginning at the upper part of the face, or the under—at the right side or the left side. Indeed when one considers what variety of sounds can be uttered by the windpipe, in the compass of a very small aperture, we may be convinced how many degrees of difference there may be in the application of a razor.

We dined with Dr. Butter[1], whose lady is daughter of my cousin Sir John Douglas, whose grandson is now presumptive heir of the noble family of Queensberry. Johnson and he had a good deal of medical conversation. Johnson said, he had somewhere or other given an account of Dr. Nichols's discourse "*De Animâ Medicâ.*" He told us, "that whatever a man's distemper was, Dr. Nichols would not attend[2] him as a physician, if his mind was not at ease; for he believed that no medicines would have any influence. He once attended a man in trade, upon whom he found none of the medicines he prescribed had any effect; he asked the man's wife privately whether his affairs were not in a bad way? She said no. He continued his attendance some time, still without success. At length the man's wife told him she had discovered that her husband's affairs *were* in a bad way. When Goldsmith was dying, Dr. Turton said to him, 'Your pulse is in greater disorder than it should be, from the degree of fever which you have: is your mind at ease?' Goldsmith answered it was not."

After dinner, Mrs. Butter went with me to see the silk-mill which Mr. John Lombe had[3] had a patent for, having brought away the contrivance from Italy. I am not very conversant with mechanicks; but the simplicity of this machine, and its multiplied operations, struck me with an agreeable surprise. I had learnt from Dr. Johnson, during this interview, not to think with a dejected indifference of the works of art, and the pleasures of life, because life is uncertain and short; but to consider such indifference as a failure of reason, a morbidness of mind; for happiness should be cultivated as much as we can, and the objects which are instrumental to it should be steadily considered as of importance with a reference not only to ourselves, but to multitudes in successive ages. Though it is proper to value small parts, as

> "Sands make the mountain, moments make the year;"—YOUNG.

yet we must contemplate, collectively, to have a just estimation of objects. One moment's being uneasy or not, seems of no consequence; yet this may be thought of the next, and the next, and so on, till there is a large portion of misery. In the same way one must think of happiness, of learning, of friendship. We cannot tell the precise moment when friendship is formed. As in filling a vessel drop by drop, there is at last a drop which makes it run over; so in a series of kindnesses there is at last one which makes the heart run over. We must not divide the objects of our attention into minute parts, and think separately of each part. It is by contemplating a large mass of human existence, that a man, while he sets a just value on his own life, does not think of his death as annihilating all that is great and pleasing in the world, as if actually *contained in his mind*, according to Berkeley's reverie[4]. If his imagination be not sickly and feeble, it "wings its distant way" far beyond himself, and views the world in unceasing activity of every sort. It must be acknowledged, however, that Pope's plaintive reflection, that all things would be as gay as ever, on the day of his death, is natural and common. We are apt to transfer to all around us our own gloom, without considering that at any given point of time there is, perhaps, as much youth and gaiety in the world as at another. Before I came into this life, in which I have had so many pleasant scenes, have not thousands and ten thousands of deaths and funerals happened, and have not families been in grief for their nearest relations? But have those dismal circumstances at all affected *me?* Why then should the gloomy scenes which I experience, or which I know, affect others? Let us guard against imagining that there is an end of felicity upon earth, when we ourselves grow old, or are unhappy.

[1] Dr. Butter was at this time a practising physician at Derby. He afterwards removed to London, where he died in his seventy-ninth year, March 22, 1805. He is authour of several medical tracts.—MALONE.

[2] [Dr. Nichols's opinion had made a strong impression on Johnson's mind, and appears to have been the cause of his urging Mrs. Aston and his other correspondents, as we have seen above, to keep her mind as much as possible at ease.—HALL.]

[3] See Hutton's "History of Derby," a book which is deservedly esteemed for its information, accuracy, and good narrative. Indeed the age in which we live is eminently distinguished by topographical exceilence.—BOSWELL.

[4] [This is by no means an accurate allusion to Berkeley's theory.—ED.]

Dr. Johnson told us at tea, that when some of Dr. Dodd's pious friends were trying to console him by saying that he was going to leave a "wretched world," he had honesty enough not to join in the cant:—"No, no," said he, "it has been a very agreeable world to me." Johnson added, "I respect Dodd for thus speaking the truth; for, to be sure, he had for several years enjoyed a life of great voluptuousness."

He told us that Dodd's city friends stood by him so, that a thousand pounds were ready to be given to the gaoler, if he would let him escape. He added, that he knew a friend of Dodd's, who walked about Newgate for some time on the evening before the day of his execution, with five hundred pounds in his pocket, ready to be paid to any of the turnkeys who could get him out, but it was too late; for he was watched with much circumspection. He said, Dodd's friends had an image of him made of wax, which was to have been left in his place; and he believed it was carried into the prison.

Reyn. Recoll. [Dr. Johnson also told Miss Reynolds that Dodd probably entertained some hopes of life even to the last moment, having been flattered by some of his medical friends that there was a chance of suspending its total extinction till he was cut down, by placing the knot of the rope in a particular manner behind his ear. That then he was to be carried to a convenient place, where they would use their utmost endeavour to recover him. All this was done. The hangman observed their injunctions in fixing the rope, and as the cart drew off, said in Dodd's ear, you must not move an inch! But he struggled.—Being carried to the place appointed, his friends endeavoured to restore him by bathing his breast with warm water, which Dr. Johnson said was not so likely to have that effect as cold water; and on this occasion he repeated [with a slight variation] the story already told, that a man wandered round the prison some days before his execution, with bank notes in his pocket to the amount of a thousand pounds, to bribe the jailor to let him escape.]

Johnson disapproved of Dr. Dodd's leaving the world persuaded that "The Convict's Address to his unhappy Brethren" was of his own writing. "But, sir (said I), you contributed to the deception; for when Mr. Seward expressed a doubt to you that it was not Dodd's own, because it had a great deal more force of mind in it than any thing known to be his, you answered,—'Why should you think so? Depend upon it, sir, when any man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.'" JOHNSON. "Sir, as Dodd got it from me to pass as his own, while that could do him any good, that was an *implied promise* that I should not own it. To own it, therefore, would have been telling a lie, with the addition of breach of promise, which was worse than simply telling a lie to make it be believed it was Dodd's. Besides, sir, I did not *directly* tell a lie: I left the matter uncertain. Perhaps I thought that Seward would not believe it the less to be mine for what I said; but I would not put it in his power to say I had owned it."

He praised Blair's Sermons: "Yet," said he, (willing to let us see he was aware that fashionable fame, however deserved, is not always the most lasting,) "perhaps they may not be reprinted after seven years; at least not after Blair's death."

He said, "Goldsmith was a plant that flowered late. There appeared nothing remarkable about him when he was young; though when he had got high in fame, one of his friends [1] began to recollect something of his being distinguished at college [2]. Goldsmith in the same manner recollected more of that friend's early years, as he grew a greater man."

I mentioned that Lord Monboddo told me, he awaked every morning at four, and then for his health got up and walked in his room naked, with the window open, which he called taking *an air-bath;* after which he went to bed again, and slept two hours more. Johnson, who was always ready to beat down any thing that seemed to be exhibited with disproportionate importance, thus observed: "I suppose, sir, there is no more in it than this, he wakes at four, and cannot sleep till he chills himself, and makes the warmth of the bed a grateful sensation."

I talked of the difficulty of rising in the morning. Dr. Johnson told me, "that the learned Mrs. Carter, at that period when she was eager in study, did not awake as early as she wished, and she therefore had a contrivance, that, at a certain hour, her chamber-light should burn a string to which a heavy weight was suspended, which then fell with a strong sudden noise: this roused her from sleep, and then she had no difficulty in getting up." But I said *that* was my difficulty; and wished there could be some medicine invented which would make one rise without pain, which I never did, unless after lying in bed a very long time. Perhaps there may be something in the stores of Nature which could do this. I have thought of a pulley to raise me gradually;

[1] [Mr. Burke.—ED.]

[2] He *was* distinguished in college, as appears from a circumstance mentioned by Dr Kearney. See vol. i. p. 185.—MALONE.

but that would give me pain, as it would counteract my internal inclination. I would have something that can dissipate the *vis inertiæ*, and give elasticity to the muscles. As I imagine that the human body may be put, by the operation of other substances, into any state in which it has ever been; and as I have experienced a state in which rising from bed was not disagreeable, but easy, nay, sometimes agreeable; I suppose that this state may be produced, if we knew by what. We can heat the body, we can cool it; we can give it tension or relaxation; and surely it is possible to bring it into a state in which rising from bed will not be a pain.

Johnson observed, that "a man should take a sufficient quantity of sleep, which Dr. Mead says is between seven and nine hours." I told him, that Dr. Cullen said to me, that a man should not take more sleep than he can take at once. JOHNSON. "This rule, sir, cannot hold in all cases; for many people have their sleep broken by sickness; and surely, Cullen would not have a man to get up, after having slept but an hour. Such a regimen would soon end in a *long sleep*[1]." Dr. Taylor remarked I think very justly, that "a man who does not feel an inclination to sleep at the ordinary times, instead of being stronger than other people, must not be well; for a man in health has all the natural inclinations to eat, drink, and sleep, in a strong degree."

Johnson advised me to-night not to *refine* in the education of my children. "Life," said he, "will not bear refinement: you must do as other people do."

Hawk. Apoph. p. 204. [When he was asked by Dr. Lawrence what he thought the best system of education, he replied, "School in school-hours, and home-instruction in the intervals."]

Piozzi, p. 168, 169. [On another occasion he maintained that "A boy should never be sent to Eton or Westminster school before he is twelve years old at least, for if in his years of babyhood he fails to attain that general and transcendent knowledge without which life is perpetually put to a stand, he will never get it at a public school, where if he does not learn Latin and Greek, he learns nothing." Dr. Johnson often said, "that there was too much stress laid upon literature as indispensably necessary: there is surely no need that every body should be a scholar, no call that every one should square the circle Our manner of teaching cramps and warps many a mind, which if left more at liberty would have been respectable in some way though perhaps not in that." "We top our trees, and prune them, and pinch them about," he would say, "and nail them tight up to the wall, while a good standard is at last the only thing for bearing healthy fruit, though it commonly begins later. Let the people learn necessary knowledge: let them learn to count their fingers, and to count their money, before they are caring for the classicsk; for," says Dr. Johnson, "though I do not quite agree with the proverb, that *Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia*, yet we may very well say, that *Nullum numen adest—ni sit prudentia.*"

Indeed useful and what we call every-day knowledge had the most of his just praise. "Let your boy learn arithmetic, dear madam," was his advice to the mother of a rich young heir: "he will not then be a prey to every rascal which this town swarms with: teach him the value of money and how to reckon it: ignorance to a wealthy lad of one-and-twenty is only so much fat to a sick sheep: it just serves to call the *rooks* about him."]

[This young heir was the well-known Sir John Lade[2], and Dr. Johnson's sagacity had, no doubt, detected in him a disposition to that profusion for which he was afterwards so remarkable. It is curious too, that, on another important subject, Johnson should have given Sir John some early advice, which, in the sequel, he too notoriously disregarded.] ED.

Piozzi. p. 74, 75. [One day, as he was musing over the fire of the drawing-room at Streatham, this young gentleman [who was Mr. Thrale's nephew and ward] called to him suddenly, and rather disrespectfully, in these words: "Dr. Johnson, would you advise me to marry?" "I would advise no man to marry, sir (replied in a very angry tone Dr. Johnson), who is not

[1] [This regimen was, however, practised by Bishop Ken, of whom Hawkins (*not Sir John*) in his life of that venerable prelate, page 4, tells us, "And that neither his study might be the aggressor on his hours of instruction, or what he judged his duty, prevent his improvements; or both, his closet addresses to his God; he strictly accustomed himself to but one sleep, which often obliged him to rise at one or two of the clock in the morning, and sometimes sooner; and grew so habitual, that it continued with him almost till his last illness. And so lively and cheerful was his temper, that he would be very facetious and entertaining to his friends in the evening, even when it was perceived that with difficulty he kept his eyes open; and then seemed to go to rest with no other purpose than the refreshing and enabling him with more vigour and cheerfulness to sing his morning hymn, as he then used to do to his lute before he put on his clothes."—BOSWELL.

[2] [He was the posthumous son of the fourth baronet, by Mr. Thrale's sister. He entered eagerly into all the follies of the day; was a remarkable *whip*, and married a woman of the town. See towards the close of the second vol. *sub* Dec. 1784, the lively, satirical, and too prophetic verses which Johnson wrote on his coming of age.—ED.]

likely to propagate understanding;" and so left the room. Our companion looked confounded, and seemed to have scarce recovered the consciousness of his own existence, when Johnson came back and drawing his chair among the party, with altered looks and a softened voice, joined in the general chat, insensibly led the conversation to the subject of marriage, where he explained himself in a dissertation so useful, so elegant, so founded on the true knowledge of human life, and so adorned with beauty of sentiment, that no one ever recollected the offence, except to rejoice in its consequences.]

As we drove back to Ashbourne, Dr. Johnson recommended to me, as he had often done, to drink water only: "For," said he, "you are then sure not to get drunk; whereas, if you drink wine, you are never sure." I said, drinking wine was a pleasure which I was unwilling to give up. "Why, sir," said he, "there is no doubt that not to drink wine is a great deduction from life: but it may be necessary." He however owned, that in his opinion a free use of wine did not shorten life; and said, he would not give less for the life of a certain Scotch Lord[1] (whom he named) celebrated for hard drinking, than for that of a sober man. "But stay," said he, with his usual intelligence, and accuracy of inquiry —"does it take much wine to make him drunk?" I answered, "A great deal either of wine or strong punch."—"Then," said he, "that is the worse." I presume to illustrate my friend's observation thus: "A fortress which soon surrenders has its walls less shattered than when a long and obstinate resistance is made."

I ventured to mention a person who was as violent a Scotchman as he was an Englishman; and literally had the same contempt for an Englishman compared with a Scotchman, that he had for a Scotchman compared with an Englishman; and that he would say of Dr. Johnson, "Damned rascal! to talk as he does of the Scotch." This seemed, for a moment, "to give him pause." It, perhaps, presented his extreme prejudice against the Scotch in a point of view somewhat new to him by the effect of *contrast*.

By the time when we returned to Ashbourne, Dr. Taylor was gone to bed. Johnson and I sat up a long time by ourselves.

He was much diverted with an article which I showed him in the "Critical Review" of this year, giving an account of a curious publication, entitled "A Spiritual Diary and Soliloquies, by John Rutty, M. D." Dr. Rutty was one of the people called quakers, a physician of some eminence in Dublin, and author of several works. This Diary, which was kept from 1753 to 1775, the year in which he died, and was now published in two volumes octavo, exhibited, in the simplicity of his heart, a minute and honest register of the state of his mind; which, though frequently laughable enough, was not more so than the history of many men would be, if recorded with equal fairness.

The following specimens were extracted by the reviewers:

"Tenth month, 1753.

"23—Indulgence in bed an hour too long.

"Twelfth month, 17.—An hypochondriack obnubilation from wind and indigestion.

"Ninth month, 28.—An over-dose of whiskey.

"29.—A dull, cross, cholerick day.

"First month, 1757, 22.—A little swinish at dinner and repast.

"Dogged on provocation.

"Second month, 5.—Very dogged or snappish.

"14.—Snappish on fasting.

"26.—Cursed snappishness to those under me, on a bodily indisposition.

"Third month, 11.—On a provocation, exercised a dumb resentment for two days, instead of scolding.

"22.—Scolded too vehemently.

"23.—Dogged again.

"Fourth month, 29.—Mechanically and sinfully dogged."

Johnson laughed heartily at this good Quietist's self-condemning minutes; particularly at his mentioning, with such a serious regret, occasional instances of "*swinishness* in eating, and *doggedness of temper*." He thought the observations of the Critical Reviewers upon the importance of a man to himself so ingenious and so well expressed, that I shall here introduce them.

After observing, that "there are few writers who have gained any reputation by recording their own actions," they say,

"We may reduce the egotists to four classes. In the *first* we have Julius Cæsar: he relates his own transactions; but he relates them with peculiar grace and dignity, and his narrative is supported by the greatness of his character and achievements. In the *second* class we have Marcus Antoninus: this writer has given us a series of reflections on his own life; but his sentiments are so noble, his morality so sublime, that his meditations are universally admired. In the *third* class we have some others of the

[1] [Probably Thomas, sixth Earl of Kellie, born in 1732; died in 1781. He was remarkable for some musical talents, but still more for his conviviality. Even the *Peerage* confesses "that he was more assiduous in the service of Bacchus than Apollo."—Ed.]

erable credit, who have given importance to their own private history by an intermixture of literary anecdotes, and the occurrences of their own times: the celebrated *Huetius*[1] has published an entertaining volume upon this plan, '*De rebus ad eum pertinentibus.*' In the *fourth* class we have the journalist, temporal and spiritual: Elias Ashmole, William Lilly, George Whitefield, John Wesley, and a thousand other old women and fanatick writers of memoirs and meditations."

I mentioned to him that Dr. Hugh Blair, in his Lectures on Rhetorick and Belles Lettres, which I heard him deliver at Edinburgh, had animadverted on the Johnsonian style as too pompous; and attempted to imitate it, by giving a sentence of Addison in "The Spectator," No. 411, in the manner of Johnson. When treating of the utility of the pleasures of imagination in preserving us from vice, it is observed of those "who know not how to be idle and innocent," that "their very first step out of business is into vice or folly;" which Dr. Blair supposed would have been expressed in "The Rambler" thus: "their very first step out of the regions of business is into the perturbation of vice, or the vacuity of folly[2]." JOHNSON. "Sir, these are not the words I should have used. No, sir; the imitators of my style have not hit it. Miss Aikin has done it the best; for she has imitated the sentiment as well as the diction[3]."

I intend, before this work is concluded, to exhibit specimens of imitation of my friend's style in various modes; some caricaturing or mimicking it, and some formed upon it, whether intentionally, or with a degree of similarity to it, of which perhaps the writers were not conscious.

In Baretti's Review, which he published in Italy, under the title of "FRUSTA LETTERARIA," it is observed, that Dr. Robertson the historian had formed his style upon that of "*Il celebre Samuele Johnson.*" My friend himself was of that opinion; for he once said to me, in a pleasant humour, "Sir, if Robertson's style be faulty, he owes it to me; that is, having too many words, and those too big ones."

I read to him a letter which Lord Monboddo had written to me, containing some critical remarks upon the style of his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland." His lordship praised the very fine passage upon landing at Icolmkill[4]: but his own style being exceedingly dry and hard, he disapproved of the richness of Johnson's language, and of his frequent use of metaphorical expressions. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, this criticism would be just, if, in my style, superfluous words, or words too big for the thoughts, could be pointed out; but this I do not believe can be done. For instance, in the passage which Lord Monboddo admires, 'We were now treading that illustrious region,' the word *illustrious* contributes nothing to the mere narration; for the fact might be told without it: but it is not, therefore, superfluous; for it wakes the mind to peculiar attention, where something of more than usual importance is to be presented. 'Illustrious!'—for what? and then the sentence proceeds to expand the circumstances connected with Iona. And, sir, as to metaphorical expression, that is a great excellence in style, when it is used with propriety, for it gives you two ideas for one;—conveys the meaning more luminously, and generally with a perception of delight."

He told me, that he had been asked to undertake the new edition of the "Biographia Britannica," but had declined it; which he afterwards said to me he regretted. In this regret many will join, because it would have procured us more of Johnson's most delightful species of writing; and although my friend Dr. Kippis[5] has hitherto discharged the task judiciously, distinctly, and with more impartiality than might have been expected from a separatist, it were to have been wished that the superintendence of this literary Temple of Fame had been assigned to "a friend to the constitution in church and state." We should not then have had it too much crowded with obscure dissenting teachers, doubtless men of merit and worth, but not quite to be numbered amongst "the most eminent persons who have flourished in Great Britain and Ireland[6]."

[1] [Huet, Bishop of Avranches.—See *ante*, v. i. p. 32.—ED.]

[2] When Dr. Blair published his "Lectures," he was invidiously attacked for having omitted his censure on Johnson's style, and, on the contrary, praising it highly. But before that time Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" had appeared, in which his style was considerably easier than when he wrote "The Rambler." It would, therefore, have been uncandid in Blair, even supposing his criticism to have been just, to have preserved it.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Probably in an essay "Against Inconsistency in our Expectations," by Miss Aikin, afterwards Mrs. Barbauld, in a volume of miscellaneous pieces published by her and her brother, Dr. Aikin, in 1773.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 440.—ED.]

[5] After having given to the publick the first five volumes of a new edition of the BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA, between the years 1778 and 1793, Dr. Kippis died, October 8, 1795; and the work is not likely to be soon completed.—MALONE.

[6] In this censure, which has been carelessly uttered, I carelessly joined. But in justice to Dr. Kippis, who, with that manly candid good temper which marks his character, set me right, I now

On Saturday, September 20, after breakfast, when Taylor was gone out to his farm, Dr. Johnson and I had a serious conversation by ourselves on melancholy and madness; which he was, I always thought, erroneously inclined to confound together. Melancholy, like "great wit," may be "near allied to madness;" but there is, in my opinion, a distinct separation between them. When he talked of madness, he was to be understood as speaking of those who were in any great degree disturbed, or as it is commonly expressed, "troubled in mind." Some of the ancient philosophers held, that all deviations from right reason were madness; and whoever wishes to see the opinions both of ancients and moderns upon this subject, collected and illustrated with a variety of curious facts, may read Dr. Arnold's very entertaining work [1].

Johnson said, "A madman loves to be with people whom he fears; not as a dog fears the lash: but of whom he stands in awe." I was struck with the justice of this observation. To be with those of whom a person, whose mind is wavering and dejected, stands in awe, represses and composes an uneasy tumult of spirits [2], and consoles him with the contemplation of something steady, and at least comparatively great.

He added, "Madmen are all sensual in the lower stages of the distemper. They are eager for gratifications to soothe their minds and divert their attention from the misery which they suffer; but when they grow very ill, pleasure is too weak for them, and they seek for pain [3]. Employment, sir, and hardships, prevent melancholy. I suppose, in all our army in America, there was not one man who went mad."

["He was," says Sir. J. Hawkins, "a great enemy to the present fashionable way of supposing worthless and infamous persons mad."] [This probably meant that he disapproved of the degree of impunity which is sometimes afforded to crime, under the plea of insanity, for it seems almost certain that he thought (and perhaps felt) that the exercises of piety, and the restraints of conscience, might repress a tendency towards insanity. So at least Miss Reynolds believed.] ["It was doubtless," she says, "very natural for so good a man to keep a strict watch over his mind; but one so very strict as Dr. Johnson kept may, perhaps, in some measure, be attributed to his dread of its hereditary tendencies, which, I had reason to believe, he was very apprehensive bordered upon insanity. Probably his studious

Hawk. Apoph. p. 208.

Ed

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with pleasure retract it; and I desire it may be particularly observed, as pointed out by him to me, that "The new lives of dissenting divines, in the first four volumes of the second edition of the 'Biographia Britannica,' are those of John Abernethy, Thomas Amory, George Benson, Hugh Broughton, the learned puritan, Simon Browne, Joseph Boyse, of Dublin, Thomas Cartwright, the learned puritan, and Samuel Chandler. The only doubt I have ever heard suggested is, whether there should have been an article of Dr. Amory. But I was convinced, and am still convinced, that he was entitled to one, from the reality of his learning, and the excellent and candid nature of his practical writings.

"The new lives of clergymen of the church of England, in the same four volumes, are as follows: John Balguy, Edward Bentham, George Berkley, Bishop of Cloyne, William Berriman, Thomas Birch, William Borlase, Thomas Bott, James Bradley, Thomas Broughton, John Browne, John Burton, Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, Thomas Carte, Edmund Castell, Edmund Chisnull, Charles Churchill, William Clarke, Robert Clayton, Bishop of Clogher, John Conybeare, Bishop of Bristo , George Castard, and Samuel Croxall.—'I am not conscious,' says Dr. Kippis, 'of any partiality in conducting the work. I would not willingly insert a dissenting minister that does not justly deserve to be noticed, or omit an established clergyman that does. At the same time, I shall not be deterred from introducing dissenters into the Biographia, when I am satisfied that they are entitled to that distinction, from their writings, learning, and merit.'"

Let me add that the expression "A friend to the constitution in church and state," was not meant by me as any reflection upon this reverend gentleman, as if he were an enemy to the political constitution of his country, as established at the Revolution, but, from my steady and avowed predilection for a *tory*, was quoted from "Johnson's Dictionary," where that distinction is so defined.—Boswell.

[1] "Observations on Insanity," by Thomas Arnold, M. D., London, 1782.—Boswell.

[2] Cardan composed his mind tending to madness (or rather actually mad, for such he seems in his writings, learned as they are), by exciting voluntary pain. V. Card. Op. et Vit.—Kearney.

[3] We read in the gospels, that those unfortunate persons, who were possessed with evil spirits (which, after all, I think is the most probable cause of madness, as was first suggested to me by my respectable friend Sir John Pringle), had recourse to pain, tearing themselves, and, jumping sometimes into the fire; sometimes into the water. Mr. Seward has furnished me with a remarkable anecdote in confirmation of Dr. Johnson's observation. A tradesman who had acquired a large fortune in London retired from business, and went to live at Worcester. His mind, being without its usual occupation, and having nothing else to supply its place, preyed upon itself, so that existence was a torment to him. At last he was seized with the stone; and a friend who found him in one of its severest fits, having expressed his concern, "No, no, sir," said he, "don't pity me; what I now feel is ease, compared with that torture of mind from which it relieves me."—Boswell.

attention to repel their prevalency, together with his experience of divine assistance co-operating with his reasoning faculties, may have proved in the highest degree conducive to the exaltation of his piety, the pre-eminency of his wisdom, and I think it probable that all his natural defects, which so peculiarly debarred him from unprofitable amusements, were also conducive to the same end.

"That Dr. Johnson's mind was preserved from insanity by his devotional aspirations, may surely be reasonably supposed. No man could have a firmer reliance on the efficacy of prayer; and he would often, with a solemn earnestness, beg of his intimate friends to pray for him, and apparently on very slight occasions of corporeal indisposition."]

We entered seriously upon a question of much importance to me, which Johnson was pleased to consider with friendly attention. I had long complained to him that I felt myself discontented in Scotland, as too narrow a sphere, and that I wished to make my chief residence in London, the great scene of ambition, instruction, and amusement; a scene, which was to me, comparatively speaking, a heaven upon earth. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I never knew any one who had such a *gust* for London as you have: and I cannot blame you for your wish to live there; yet, sir, were I in your father's place, I should not consent to your settling there; for I have the old feudal notions, and I should be afraid that Auchinleck would be deserted, as you would soon find it more desirable to have a country-seat in a better climate. I own, however, that to consider it as a *duty* to reside on a family estate is a prejudice; for we must consider, that working-people get employment equally, and the produce of land is sold equally, whether a great family resides at home or not; and if the rents of an estate be carried to London, they return again in the circulation of commerce; nay, sir, we must perhaps allow, that carrying the rents to a distance is a good, because it contributes to that circulation. We must, however, allow, that a well-regulated great family may improve a neighbourhood in civility and elegance, and give an example of good order, virtue, and piety; and so its residence at home may be of much advantage. But if a great family be disorderly and vicious, its residence at home is very pernicious to a neighbourhood. There is not now the same inducement to live in the country as formerly; the pleasures of social life are much better enjoyed in town; and there is no longer in the country that power and influence in proprietors of land which they had in old times, and which made the country so agreeable to them. The Laird of Auchinleck now is not near so great a man as the Laird of Auchinleck was a hundred years ago."

I told him, that one of my ancestors never went from home without being attended by thirty men on horseback. Johnson's shrewdness and spirit of inquiry were exerted upon every occasion. "Pray," said he, "how did your ancestor support his thirty men and thirty horses when he went at a distance from home, in an age when there was hardly any money in circulation?" I suggested the same difficulty to a friend who mentioned Douglas's going to the Holy Land with a numerous train of followers[1]. Douglas could, no doubt, maintain followers enough while living upon his own lands, the produce of which supplied them with food; but he could not carry that food to the Holy Land; and as there was no commerce by which he could be supplied with money, how could he maintain them in foreign countries?

I suggested a doubt, that if I were to reside in London, the exquisite zest with which I relished it in occasional visits might go off, and I might grow tired of it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

To obviate his apprehension, that by settling in London I might desert the seat of my ancestors, I assured him that I had old feudal principles to a degree of enthusiasm; and that I felt all the *dulcedo* of the *natale solum*. I reminded him, that the Laird of Auchinleck had an elegant house, in front of which he could ride ten miles forward upon his own territories, upon which he had upwards of six hundred people attached to him; that the family seat was rich in natural romantick beauties of rock, wood, and water, and that in my "morn of life" I had appropriated the finest descriptions in the ancient classicks to certain scenes there, which were thus associated in my mind. That when all this was considered, I should certainly pass a part of the year at home, and enjoy it the more from variety, and from bringing with me a share of the intellectual stores of the metropolis. He listened to all this, and kindly "hoped it might be as I now supposed."

He said, a country gentleman should bring his lady to visit London as soon as he can, that they may have agreeable topicks

[1] ["James de Duglas was requested by King Robert Bruce in his last hours to repair with his heart to Jerusalem, and humbly to deposit it at the sepulchre of our Lord;" which he did in 1330 —*Hailes's Ann.* 2. 146. Hence the *crowned heart* in the arms of Douglas.—FD.]

or conversation when they are by themselves.

As I meditated trying my fortune in Westminster Hall, our conversation turned upon the profession of the law in England. JOHNSON. "You must not indulge too sanguine hopes, should you be called to our bar. I was told, by a very sensible lawyer, that there are a great many chances against any man's success in the profession of the law; the candidates are so numerous, and those who get large practice so few. He said, it was by no means true that a man of good parts and application is sure of having business, though he, indeed, allowed that if such a man could but appear in a few causes, his merit would be known, and he would get forward; but that the great risk was, that a man might pass half a life-time in the courts, and never have an opportunity of showing his abilities [1]."

We talked of employment being absolutely necessary to preserve the mind from wearying and growing fretful, especially in those who have a tendency to melancholy; and I mentioned to him a saying which somebody had related of an American savage, who, when an European was expatiating on all the advantages of money, put this question: "Will it purchase *occupation?*" JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, this saying is too refined for a savage. And, sir, money *will* purchase occupation; it will purchase all the conveniences of life; it will purchase variety of company; it will purchase all sorts of entertainment [2]."

I talked to him of Forster's "Voyage to the South Seas," which pleased me; but I found he did not like it. "Sir," said he, "there is a great affectation of fine writing in it." BOSWELL. "But he carries you along with him." JOHNSON. "No, sir; he does not carry *me* along with him; he leaves me behind him; or rather, indeed, he sets me before him, for he makes me turn over many leaves at a time."

On Sunday, September 21, we went to the church of Ashbourne, which is one of the largest and most luminous that I have seen in any town of the same size. I felt great satisfaction in considering that I was supported in my fondness for solemn publick worship by the general concurrence and munificence of mankind.

Johnson and Taylor were so different from each other, that I wondered at their preserving an intimacy. Their having been at school and college together might, in some degree, account for this; but Sir Joshua Reynolds has furnished me with a stronger reason; for Johnson mentioned to him, that he had been told by Taylor he was to be his heir. I shall not take upon me to animadvert upon this; but certain it is that Johnson paid great attention to Taylor. He now, however, said to me, "Sir, I love him; but I do not love him more; my regard for him does not increase. As it is said in the Apocrypha, 'his talk is of bullocks [3].' I do not suppose he is very fond of my company. His habits are by no means sufficiently clerical: this he knows that I see; and no man likes to live under the eye of perpetual disapprobation."

I have no doubt that a good many sermons were composed for Taylor by Johnson. At this time I found upon his table a part of one which he had newly begun to write: and *Concio pro Tayloro* appears in one of his diaries. When to these circumstances we add the internal evidence from the power of thinking and style, in the collection which the Reverend Mr. Hayes had published, with the *significant* title of "Sermons *left for Publication*, by the Reverend John Taylor, LL. D.," our conviction will be complete.

I, however, would not have it thought that Dr. Taylor, though he could not write like Johnson (as, indeed, who could?), did not sometimes compose sermons as good as those which we generally have from very respectable divines. He showed me one with notes on the margin in Johnson's hand-writing; and I was present when he read another to Johnson, that he might have his opinion of it, and Johnson said it was "very well." These, we may be sure, were not Johnson's; for he was above little arts, or tricks of deception.

Johnson was by no means of opinion that every man of a learned profession should consider it as incumbent upon him, or as necessary to his credit, to appear as an au-

[1] Now, at the distance of fifteen years since this conversation passed, the observation which I have had an opportunity of making in Westminster Hall has convinced me, that, however true the opinion of Dr. Johnson's legal friend may have been some time ago, the same certainty of success cannot now be promised to the same display of merit. The reasons, however, of the rapid rise of some, and disappointment of others equally respectable, are such as it might seem invidious to mention, and would require a longer detail than would be proper for this work.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell's personal feelings here have clouded his perception, for Johnson's friend was far from holding out any thing like a *certainty* of success —Nay, he seems to have scarcely allowed a probability.—ED.]

[2] [Nay, it may be said to purchase or rather to create *occupation* too. No man can have riches without the trouble that in different degrees must accompany them.—ED.]

[3] Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxxviii. v. 25. The whole chapter may be read as an admirable illustration of the superiority of cultivated minds over the gross and illiterate.—BOSWELL.

thour. When, in the ardour of ambition for literary fame, I regretted to him one day that an eminent judge[1] had nothing of it, and therefore would leave no perpetual monument of himself to posterity; "Alas! sir," said Johnson, "what a mass of confusion should we have, if every bishop, and every judge, every lawyer, physician, and divine, were to write books!"

I mentioned to Johnson a respectable person of a very strong mind[2], who had little of that tenderness which is common to human nature; as an instance of which, when I suggested to him that he should invite his son, who had been settled ten years in foreign parts, to come home and pay him a visit, his answer was, "No, no, let him mind his business." JOHNSON. "I do not agree with him, sir, in this. Getting money is not all a man's business: to cultivate kindness is a valuable part of the business of life."

In the evening, Johnson, being in very good spirits, entertained us with several characteristical portraits; I regret that any of them escaped my retention and diligence. I found from experience, that to collect my friend's conversation so as to exhibit it with any degree of its original flavour, it was necessary to write it down without delay. To record his sayings, after some distance of time, was like preserving or pickling long-kept and faded fruits, or other vegetables, which, when in that state, have little or nothing of their taste when fresh.

I shall present my readers with a series of what I gathered this evening from the Johnsonian garden.

"My friend, the late Earl of Corke, had a great desire to maintain the literary character of his family: he was a genteel man, but did not keep up the dignity of his rank. He was so generally civil, that nobody thanked him for it."

"Did we not hear so much said of Jack Wilkes, we should think more highly of his conversation. Jack has a great variety of talk, Jack is a scholar, and Jack has the manners of a gentleman. But after hearing his name sounded from pole to pole, as the phœnix of convivial felicity, we are disappointed in his company. He has always been at *me:* but I would do Jack a kindness, rather than not[3]. The contest is now over."

"Garrick's gaiety of conversation has delicacy and elegance; Foote makes you laugh more; but Foote has the air of a buffoon paid for entertaining the company. He, indeed, well deserves his hire." ["Foote's happiness of manner in relating was such," Johnson said, "as subdued arrogance and roused stupidity: *his* stories were truly like those of Biron, in Love's Labour Lost, so *very* attractive

Piozzi, p. 134, 142

> 'That aged ears play'd truant with his tales,
> And younger hearings were quite ravished,
> So sweet and voluble was his discourse.'"

"Of all conversers, however," added he, "the late Hawkins Browne was the most delightful with whom I ever was in company; his talk was at once so elegant, so apparently artless, so pure, and so pleasing, it seemed a perpetual stream of sentiment, enlivened by gaiety, and sparkling with images." Mrs. Piozzi used to think Mr. Johnson's determined preference of a cold, monotonous talker over an emphatical and violent one, would make him quite a favourite among the men of *ton*, whose insensibility, or affectation of perpetual calmness, certainly did not give to him the offence it does to many. He loved "conversation without effort," he said; and the encomiums which he so often pronounced on the manners of Topham Beauclerc in society constantly ended in that peculiar praise that "it was without *effort*."]

"Colley Cibber once consulted me as to one of his birthday odes, a long time before it was wanted. I objected very freely to several passages. Cibber lost patience, and would not read his ode to an end. When we had done with criticism we walked over to Richardson's, the authour of 'Clarissa,' and I wondered to find Richardson displeased that I 'did not treat Cibber with more *respect.*' Now, sir, to talk of *respect* for a *player*[4]!" (smiling disdainfully.) BOSWELL. "There, sir, you are always heretical: you never will allow merit to a player." JOHNSON. "Merit, sir! what merit? Do you respect a rope-dancer or a ballad-singer?" BOSWELL. "No, sir; but we respect a great player, as a man who can conceive lofty sentiments, and can express them gracefully." JOHNSON. "What, sir, a fellow who claps a hump on his back, and a lump on his leg, and cries, '*I am Richard the Third?*' Nay, sir, a ballad-singer is a higher man, for he does two things; he repeats and he sings: there is both recitation and musick in his perform-

[1] [Probably Lord Mansfield.—ED.]

[2] [He means his father, old Lord Auchinleck; and the absent son was David, who spent so many years in Spain.—ED.]

[3] [See *post*, 21st May, 1783.—ED.]

[4] [Perhaps Richardson's displeasure was created by Johnson's paying no respect to the *age* of Cibber, who was almost old enough to have been his grandfather. Cibber had left the stage, and ceased to be a player before Johnson left Oxford; so that he had no more reason to despise Cibber for that profession, than Cibber would have had if he had recalled to him the days when he was usher at a school.—ED.]

ance; the player only recites." BOSWELL. "My dear sir! you may turn any thing into ridicule. I allow, that a player of farce is not entitled to respect; he does a little thing: but he who can represent exalted characters, and touch the noblest passions, has very respectable powers; and mankind have agreed in admiring great talents for the stage. We must consider, too, that a great player does what very few are capable to do; his art is a very rare faculty. *Who* can repeat Hamlet's soliloquy, 'To be, or not to be,' as Garrick does it?" JOHNSON. "Any body may. Jemmy, there (a boy about eight years old, who was in the room), will do it as well in a week." BOSWELL. "No, no, sir: and as a proof of the merit of great acting, and of the value which mankind set upon it, Garrick has got a hundred thousand pounds." JOHNSON. "Is getting a hundred thousand pounds a proof of excellence? That has been done by a scoundrel commissary."

This was most fallacious reasoning. I was *sure*, for once, that I had the best side of the argument. I boldly maintained the just distinction between a tragedian and a mere theatrical droll; between those who rouse our terrour and pity, and those who only make us laugh. "If," said I, "Betterton and Foote were to walk into this room, you would respect Betterton much more than Foote." JOHNSON. "If Betterton were to walk into this room with Foote, Foote would soon drive him out of it. Foote, sir, *quatenùs* Foote, has powers superiour to them all." [The fact was, that Johnson could not see the passions as they rose and chased one another in the varied features of the expressive face of Garrick. Mr. Murphy remembered being in conversation with Johnson near the side of the scenes, during the tragedy of King Lear: when Garrick came off the stage, he said, "You two talk so loud, you destroy all my feelings." 'Prithee," replied Johnson, "do not talk of feelings; Punch has no feelings."] Murph. p. 145.

On Monday, September 22, when at breakfast, I unguardedly said to Dr. Johnson, "I wish I saw you and Mrs. Macaulay together." He grew very angry; and, after a pause, while a cloud gathered on his brow, he burst out, "No, sir; you would not see us quarrel, to make you sport. Do n't you know that it is very uncivil to *pit* two people against one another?" Then, checking himself, and wishing to be more gentle, he added, "I do not say you should be hanged or drowned for this; but it *is* very uncivil." Dr. Taylor thought him in the wrong, and spoke to him privately of it; but I afterwards acknowledged to Johnson that I was to blame, for I candidly owned, that I meant to express a desire to see a contest between Mrs. Macaulay and him; but then I knew how the contest would end; so that I was to see him triumph. JOHNSON. "Sir, you cannot be sure how a contest will end; and no man has a right to engage two people in a dispute by which their passions may be inflamed, and they may part with bitter resentment against each other. I would sooner keep company with a man from whom I must guard my pockets, than with a man who contrives to bring me into a dispute with somebody that he may hear it. This is the great fault of ——[1] (naming one of our friends), endeavouring to introduce a subject upon which he knows two people in the company differ." BOSWELL. "But he told me, sir, he does it for instruction." JOHNSON. "Whatever the motive be, sir, the man who does so, does very wrong. He has no more right to instruct himself at such risk, than he has to make two people fight a duel, that he may learn how to defend himself."

He found great fault with a gentleman of our acquaintance for keeping a bad table. "Sir," said he, "when a man is invited to dinner, he is disappointed if he does not get something good. I advised Mrs. Thrale, who has no card-parties at her house, to give sweetmeats, and such good things, in an evening, as are not commonly given, and she would find company enough come to her; for every body loves to have things which please the palate put in their way, without trouble or preparation." [And of another lady's entertainments, he said, "What signifies going thither? there is neither meat, drink, nor talk."] Such was his attention to the *minutiæ* of life and manners. Hawk. Apoph. p. 207.

He thus characterised the Duke of Devonshire, grandfather of the present representative of that very respectable family: "He was not a man of superiour abilities, but he was a man strictly faithful to his word. If, for instance, he had promised you an acorn, and none had grown that year in his woods, he would not have contented himself with that excuse: he would have sent to Denmark for it. So unconditional was he in keeping his word; so high as to the point of honour." This was a liberal testimony from the tory Johnson to the virtue of a great whig nobleman.

Mr. Burke's "Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the Affairs of America," being mentioned, Johnson censured the composition much, and he ridiculed the definition

[1] [Mr. Langton is, no doubt, meant here, and in the next paragraph. See the affair of the 7th May, 1773 (vol. i. p. 319 and 351); where the reader will find the cause of Johnson's frequent and fretful recurrence to this complaint.—ED.]

of a free government, *viz.* "For any practical purpose, it is what the people thinks so [1]." "I will let the King of France govern me on those conditions," said he, "for it is to be governed just as I please." And when Dr. Taylor talked of a girl being sent to a parish workhouse, and asked how much she could be obliged to work, "Why," said Johnson, "as much as is reasonable; and what is that? as much as *she thinks* reasonable."

Dr. Johnson obligingly proposed to carry me to see Ilam, a romantick scene, now belonging to a family of the name of Port, but formerly the seat of the Congreves [2]. I suppose it is well described in some of the tours. Johnson described it distinctly and vividly, at which I could not but express to him my wonder; because, though my eyes, as he observed, were better than his, I could not by any means equal him in representing visible objects. I said, the difference between us in this respect was as that between a man who has a bad instrument, but plays well on it, and a man who has a good instrument, on which he can play very imperfectly.

I recollect a very fine amphitheatre, surrounded with hills covered with woods, and walks neatly formed along the side of a rocky steep, on the quarter next the house, with recesses under projections of rock, overshadowed with trees; in one of which recesses, we were told, Congreve wrote his "Old Bachelor." We viewed a remarkable natural curiosity at Ilam; two rivers bursting near each other from the rock, not from immediate springs, but after having run for many miles under ground. Plott, in his "History of Staffordshire [3]," gives an account of this curiosity; but Johnson would not believe it, though we had the attestation of the gardener, who said he had put in corks [4], where the river *Manyfold* sinks into the ground, and had catched them in a net, placed before one of the openings where the water bursts out. Indeed, such subterraneous courses of water are found in various parts of our globe [5].

Talking of Dr. Johnson's unwillingness to believe extraordinary things, I ventured to say, "Sir, you come near Hume's argument against miracles, 'That it is more probable witnesses should lie, or be mistaken, than that they should happen.'" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, Hume, taking the proposition simply, is right [6]. But the Christian Revelation is not proved by the miracles alone, but as connected with prophecies, and with the doctrines in confirmation of which the miracles were wrought."

He repeated his observation, that the differences among Christians are really of no consequence. "For instance," said he, "if a Protestant objects to a Papist, 'You worship images;' the Papist can answer, 'I do not insist on your doing it; you may be a very good Papist without it; I do it only as a help to my devotion.'" I said, the great article of Christianity is the revelation of immortality [7]. Johnson admitted it was.

In the evening, a gentleman farmer, who was on a visit at Dr. Taylor's, attempted to dispute with Johnson in favour of Mungo Campbell [8], who shot Alexander, Earl

[1] Edit. 2, p 53.—BOSWELL.

[2] [This is a mistake. The Ports had been seated at Ilam time out of mind. Congreve had visited that family at Ilam; and *his seat*, that is, *the bench*, on which he sometimes sat, in the gardens, used to be shown: this, Mr. Bernard Port—one of the ancient family, and now vicar of Ilam—thinks was the cause of Mr. Boswell's error. —ED.]

[3] Page 89.

[4] [The gardener at Ilam told the editor that it was *Johnson himself* who had made this experiment; but there is not the least doubt of the fact. The river sinks suddenly into the earth behind a hill above the valley, and bursts out again in the same direction, and with the same body of water, about four miles below.—ED.]

[5] See Plott's "History of Staffordshire," p 88, and the authorities referred to by him.—BOSWELL.

[6] [This is not quite true. It is indeed more probable that one or two interested witnesses should lie, than that a miracle should have happened; but that *distant* and *unconnected witnesses* and *circumstances* should undesignedly concur in evidencing a falsehood—and that falsehood one in itself unnatural—would be more miraculous than any miracle in Scripture; and thus *by Hume's own argument* the balance of probability is in favour of the miracles.—ED]

[7] [This is loosely expressed. The *ancients* believed in immortality, and even a state of retribution. Warburton argues that Moses was not ignorant of, and the *Mahomedans* acknowledge, a future state. On so vital a question it is not safe to rest on Mr. Boswell's colloquial phrases, which have some importance when they appear to be sanctioned by the concurrence of Dr. Johnson. *Immortality* is, indeed, *assured*, and a thousand social blessings and benefits are vouchsafed to us by the Christian revelation; but "*the great article of Christianity*" is surely the ATONEMENT!—ED.]

[8] [Campbell terminated his own life in prison It is hardly to be believed, (though there was every such appearance), that the government could have permitted him to be executed; for Lord Eglintoune was grossly the aggressor, and Campbell fired (whether accidentally or designedly) when in the act of falling, as he *retreated from* Lord Eglintoune. It does no credit to Johnson to have it recorded that he said that *he was glad they had* FOUND MEANS *to convict* a man

of Eglintoune, upon his having fallen, when retreating from his lordship, who he believed was about to seize his gun, as he had threatened to do. He said he should have done just as Campbell did. JOHNSON. "Whoever would do as Campbell did, deserves to be hanged; not that I could, as a juryman, have found him legally guilty of murder; but I am glad they found means to convict him." The gentleman farmer said, "A poor man has as much honour as a rich man; and Campbell had *that* to defend." Johnson exclaimed, "A poor man has no honour." The English yeoman, not dismayed, proceeded: "Lord Eglintoune was a damned fool to run on upon Campbell, after being warned that Campbell would shoot him if he did." Johnson, who could not bear any thing like swearing, angrily replied, "He was *not* a *damned* fool: he only thought too well of Campbell. He did not believe Campbell would be such a *damned* scoundrel, as to do so *damned* a thing." His emphasis on *damned*, accompanied with frowning looks, reproved his opponent's want of decorum in *his* presence.

Talking of the danger of being mortified by rejection, when making approaches to the acquaintance of the great, I observed "I am, however, generally for trying, 'Nothing venture, nothing have.'" JOHNSON. "Very true, sir; but I have always been more afraid of failing than hopeful of success." And, indeed, though he had all just respect for rank, no man ever less courted the favour of the great.

During this interview at Ashbourne, Johnson seemed to be more uniformly social, cheerful, and alert, than I had almost ever seen him. He was prompt on great occasions and on small. Taylor, who praised every thing of his own to excess, in short, "whose geese were all swans," as the proverb says, expatiated on the excellence of his bull-dog, which he told us was "perfectly well shaped." Johnson, after examining the animal attentively, thus repressed the vain-glory of our host:—"No, sir, he is *not* well shaped; for there is not the quick transition from the thickness of the fore-part, to the *tenuity*—the thin part—behind,—which a bull-dog ought to have." This *tenuity* was the only *hard word* that I heard him use during this interview, and it will be observed, he instantly put another expression in its place. Taylor said, a small bull-dog was as good as a large one. JOHNSON. "No, sir: for, in proportion to his size, he has strength: and your argument would prove, that a good bull-dog may be as small as a mouse." It was amazing how he entered with perspicuity and keenness upon every thing that occurred in conversation. Most men, whom I know, would no more think of discussing a question about a bull-dog, than of attacking a bull.

I cannot allow any fragment whatever that floats in my memory concerning the great subject of this work to be lost. Though a small particular may appear trifling to some, it will be relished by others; while every little spark adds something to the general blaze: and to please the true, candid, warm admirers of Johnson, and in any degree increase the splendour of his reputation, I bid defiance to the shafts of ridicule, or even of malignity. Showers of them have been discharged at my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides;" yet it still sails unhurt along the stream of time, and, as an attendant upon Johnson,

"Pursues the triumph, and partakes the gale."

One morning after breakfast, when the sun shone bright, we walked out together, and "pored" for some time with placid indolence upon an artificial waterfall, which Dr. Taylor had made by building a strong dyke of stone across the river behind the garden. It was now somewhat obstructed by branches of trees and other rubbish, which had come down the river, and settled close to it. Johnson, partly from a desire to see it play more freely, and partly from that inclination to activity which will animate, at times, the most inert and sluggish mortal, took a long pole which was lying on a bank, and pushed down several parcels of this wreck with painful assiduity, while I stood quietly by, wondering to behold the sage thus curiously employed, and smiling with a humorous satisfaction each time when he carried his point. He worked till he was quite out of breath; and having found a large dead cat so heavy that he could not move it after several efforts, "Come," said he (throwing down the pole), "*you* shall take it now;" which I accordingly did, and being a fresh man, soon made the cat tumble over the cascade. This may be laughed at as too trifling to record; but it is a small characteristic trait in the Flemish picture which I give of my friend, and in which, therefore, I mark the most minute particulars. And let it be remembered, that "Æsop at play" is one of the instructive apologues of antiquity.

I mentioned an old gentleman of our acquaintance whose memory was beginning to fail. JOHNSON. "There must be a diseased mind, where there is a failure of memory at seventy. A man's head, sir, must be morbid, if he fails so soon[1]." My friend,

whom he would not, on his own responsibility, have found guilty. Lord Eglintoune was a friend of Mr. Boswell's, and the son of the lady who treated Johnson with such flattering attention.—See *ante*, vol. i. p. 455.—ED.]

[1] [This is one of those violent and absurd assertions into which Johnson was so often betrayed

being now himself sixty-eight, might think thus: but I imagine, that *threescore and ten*, the Psalmist's period of sound human life, in later ages, may have a failure, though there be no disease in the constitution. Ps. xc. v 10.

Talking of Rochester's Poems, he said, he had given them to Mr. Steevens to castrate [1] for the edition of the poets, to which he was to write prefaces. Dr. Taylor (the only time I ever heard him say any thing witty) [2] observed, that "if Rochester had been castrated himself, his exceptionable poems would not have been written." I asked if Burnet had not given a good Life of Rochester. JOHNSON. "We have a good *Death*; there is not much *Life*." I asked whether Prior's poems were to be printed entire: Johnson said they were. I mentioned Lord Hailes's censure of Prior, in his preface to a collection of "Sacred Poems," by various hands, published by him at Edinburgh a great many years ago, where he mentions "those impure tales which will be the eternal opprobrium of their ingenious authour." JOHNSON. "Sir, Lord Hailes has forgot. There is nothing in Prior that will excite to lewdness. If Lord Hailes thinks there is, he must be more combustible than other people." I instanced the tale of "Paulo Purganti and his wife." JOHNSON. "Sir, there is nothing there, but that his wife wanted to be kissed, when poor Paulo was out of pocket. No, sir, Prior is a lady's book. No lady is ashamed to have it standing in her library [3]."

The hypochondriack disorder being mentioned, Dr. Johnson did not think it so common as I supposed. "Dr. Taylor," said he, "is the same one day as another. Burke and Reynolds are the same. Beauclerk, except when in pain, is the same. I am not so myself; but this I do not mention commonly."

I complained of a wretched changefulness, so that I could not preserve, for any long continuance, the same views of any thing It was most comfortable to me to experience in Dr. Johnson's company a relief from this uneasiness. His steady vigorous mind held firm before me those objects which my own feeble and tremulous imagination frequently presented in such a wavering state, that my reason could not judge well of them.

Dr. Johnson advised me to-day to have as many books about me as I could; that I might read upon any subject upon which I had a desire for instruction at the time. "What you read *then*," said he, "you will remember; but if you have not a book immediately ready, and the subject moulds in your mind, it is a chance if you have again a desire to study it." He added, "if a man never has an eager desire for instruction, he should prescribe a task for himself. But it is better when a man reads from immediate inclination."

[He used to say, that no man read long together with a folio on his table. "Books," said he, "that you may carry to the fire, and hold readily in your hand, are the most useful after all." He would say, "such books form the mass of general and easy reading." He was a great friend to books like the French *Esprits d'un tel*; for example, *Beauties of Watts*, &c. &c.: "at which," said he, "a man will often look and be tempted to go on, when he would have been frightened at books of a larger size, and of a more erudite appearance."] Hawk Apoph. p. 197–8.

He repeated a good many lines of Horace's Odes while we were in the chaise; I remember particularly the Ode "*Eheu fugaces*."

He said, the dispute as to the comparative excellence of Homer or Virgil [4] was inaccurate. "We must consider," said he, "whether Homer was not the greatest poet, though Virgil may have produced the finest poem [5]. Virgil was indebted to Homer for the whole invention of the structure of an epick poem, and for many of his beauties."

He told me that Bacon was a favourite authour with him; but he had never read his works till he was compiling the English Dictionary, in which he said, I might

by his private feelings and prejudices: the Psalmist says, and successive ages have proved, that the years of man are threescore years and ten; yet, because Johnson was now near seventy, he ventures to assert that any decay of the intellect at that age must be morbid.—ED.]

[1] This was unnecessary, for it had been done in the early part of the present century by Jacob Tonson.—MALONE.

[2] I am told that Horace, Earl of Orford, has a collection of *Bon-Mots* by persons who never said but one.—BOSWELL.

[3] [What extraordinary "*laxity of talk!*" It is surprising enough that Mr. Boswell should have recorded any thing so indecent as these expressions; but that Johnson should have maintained such sentiments is very astonishing and very lamentable.—ED.]

[4] I am informed by Mr. Langton, that a great many years ago he was present when this question was agitated between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Burke; and, to use Johnson's phrase, they "talked their best;" Johnson for Homer, Burke for Virgil. It may well be supposed to have been one of the ablest and most brilliant contests that ever was exhibited. How much must we regret that it has not been preserved!—BOSWELL.

[5] But where is the *inaccuracy*, if the admirers of Homer contend, that he was not only prior to Virgil in point of time, but superiour in excellence —J. BOSWELL.

see Bacon very often quoted. Mr. Seward recollects his having mentioned, that a dictionary of the English language might be compiled from Bacon's writings alone, and that he had once an intention of giving an edition of Bacon, at least of his English works, and writing the life of that great man. Had he executed this intention, there can be no doubt that he would have done it in a most masterly manner. Mallet's Life of Bacon has no inconsiderable merit as an acute and elegant dissertation relative to its subject; but Mallet's mind was not comprehensive enough to embrace the vast extent of Lord Verulam's genius and research. Dr. Warburton therefore observed, with witty justness, "that Mallet in his Life of Bacon had forgotten that he was a philosopher; and if he should write the Life of the Duke of Marlborough, which he had undertaken to do, he would probably forget that he was a general."

Wishing to be satisfied what degree of truth there was in a story which a friend of Johnson's and mine had told me to his disadvantage, I mentioned it to him in direct terms; and it was to this effect: that a gentleman[1] who had lived in great intimacy with him, shown him much kindness, and even relieved him from a spunging-house, having afterwards fallen into bad circumstances, was one day, when Johnson was at dinner with him, seized for debt, and carried to prison; that Johnson sat still undisturbed, and went on eating and drinking; upon which the gentleman's sister, who was present, could not suppress her indignation: "What, sir," said she, "are you so unfeeling, as not even to offer to go to my brother in his distress; you who have been so much obliged to him?" And that Johnson answered, "Madam, I owe him no obligation; what he did for me he would have done for a dog."

Johnson assured me, that the story was absolutely false; but, like a man conscious of being in the right, and desirous of completely vindicating himself from such a charge, he did not arrogantly rest on a mere denial, and on his general character, but proceeded thus: "Sir, I was very intimate with that gentleman, and was once relieved by him from an arrest; but I never was present when he was arrested, never knew that he was arrested, and I believe he never was in difficulties after the time when he relieved me. I loved him much; yet, in talking of his general character, I may have said, though I do not remember that I ever did say so, that as his generosity proceeded from no principle, but was a part of his profusion, he would do for a dog what he would do for a friend: but I never applied this remark to any particular instance, and certainly not to his kindness to me. If a profuse man, who does not value his money, and gives a large sum to a prostitute, gives half as much, or an equally large sum to relieve a friend, it cannot be esteemed as virtue. This was all that I could say of that gentleman; and, if said at all, it must have been said after his death. Sir, I would have gone to the world's end to relieve him. The remark about the dog, if made by me, was such a sally as might escape one when painting a man highly."

On Tuesday, September 23, Johnson was remarkably cordial to me. It being necessary for me to return to Scotland soon, I had fixed on the next day for my setting out, and I felt a tender concern at the thought of parting with him. He had, at this time, frankly communicated to me many particulars, which are inserted in this work in their proper places; and once, when I happened to mention that the expense of my jaunt would come to much more than I had computed, he said, "Why, sir, if the expense were to be an inconvenience, you would have reason to regret it; but, if you have had the money to spend, I know not that you could have purchased as much pleasure with it in any other way."

During this interview at Ashbourne, Johnson and I frequently talked with wonderful pleasure of mere trifles which had occurred in our tour to the Hebrides; for it had left a most agreeable and lasting impression upon his mind.

He found fault with me for using the phrase to *make* money. "Do n't you see," said he, "the impropriety of it? To *make* money is to *coin* it: you should say *get* money." The phrase, however, is, I think, pretty current. But Johnson was at all times jealous of infractions upon the genuine English language, and prompt to repress colloquial barbarisms; such as *pledging myself* for *undertaking; line* for *department*, or *branch*, as the *civil line*, the *banking line*. He was particularly indignant against the almost universal use of the word *idea*, in the sense of *notion* or *opinion*, when it is clear, that *idea* can only signify something of which an image can be formed in the mind. We may have an *idea* or *image* of a mountain, a tree, a building; but we cannot surely have an *idea* or *image* of an *argument* or *proposition*. Yet we hear the sages of the law "delivering their *ideas*

[1] [It appears from part of the original journal in Mr. Anderdon's papers, that the friend who told the story was Mr. Beauclerk, and the gentleman and lady alluded to were Mr. (probably Henry) and Miss Harvey. There is reason to fear that Mr. Boswell's indiscretion in betraying Mr. Beauclerk's name a little impaired the cordiality between him and Dr. Johnson.—Er.]

upon the question under consideration;" and the first speakers in parliament "entirely coinciding in the *idea* which has been ably stated by an honourable member;" or "reprobating an *idea* as unconstitutional, and fraught with the most dangerous consequences to a great and free country." Johnson called this "modern cant."

I perceived that he pronounced the word *heard*[1], as if spelt with a double *e*, *heerd*, instead of sounding it *herd*, as is most usually done[2]. He said, his reason was, that if it were pronounced *herd*, there would be a single exception from the English pronunciation of the syllable *ear*, and he thought it better not to have that exception.

He praised Grainger's "Ode on Solitude," in Dodsley's collection, and repeated, with great energy, the exordium·

"O Solitude, romantick maid,
Whether by nodding towers you tread;
Or haunt the desert's trackless gloom,
Or hover o'er the yawning tomb;
Or climb the Andes' clifted side,
Or by the Nile's coy source abide:
Or, starting from your half-year's sleep,
From Hecla view the thawing deep:
Or, at the purple dawn of day,
Tadnor's marble waste survey[3]—"

observing, "This, sir, is very noble." ["I shall never forget," says Miss Reynolds, to whom Johnson also repeated these verses, "the concordance of the sound of his voice with the grandeur of those images; nor, indeed, the gothic dignity of his aspect, his look and manner, when repeating sublime passages. But what was very remarkable, though his cadence in reading poetry was so judiciously emphatical as to give additional force to the words uttered, yet in reading prose, particularly on common or familiar subjects, narrations, essays, letters, &c. nothing could be more injudicious than his manner, beginning every period with a pompous accent, and reading it with a whine, or with a kind of spasmodic struggle for utterance; and this, not from any natural infirmity, but from a strange singularity, in reading on, in one breath, as if he had made a resolution not to respire till he had closed the sentence."] Reyn. Recoll.

In the evening our gentleman-farmer, and two others, entertained themselves and the company with a great number of tunes on the fiddle. Johnson desired to have "Let Ambition fire thy Mind" played over again, and appeared to give a patient attention to it; though he owned to me that he was very insensible to the power of musick. I told him that it affected me to such a degree, as often to agitate my nerves painfully, producing in my mind alternate sensations of pathetic dejection, so that I was ready to shed tears; and of daring resolution, so that I was inclined to rush into the thickest part of the battle. "Sir," said he, "I should never hear of it, if it made me such a fool."

Much of the effect of musick, I am satisfied, is owing to the association of ideas. That air, which instantly and irresistibly excites in the Swiss, when in a foreign land, the *maladie du pais*, has, I am told, no intrinsick power of sound. And I know from my own experience, that Scotch reels, though brisk, make me melancholy, because I used to hear them in my early years, at a time when Mr. Pitt called for soldiers, "from the mountains of the north," and numbers of brave Highlanders were going abroad, never to return. Whereas the airs in "The Beggar's Opera," many of which are very soft, never fail to render me gay, because they are associated with the warm sensations and high spirits of London. This evening, while some of the tunes of ordinary composition were played with no great skill, my frame was agitated, and I was conscious of a generous attachment to Dr. Johnson, as my preceptor and friend, mixed with an affectionate regret that he was an old man, whom I should probably lose in a short time. I thought I could defend him at the point of my sword. My reverence and affection for him were in full glow. I said to him, "My dear sir, we must meet every year, if you do n't quarrel with me." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, you are more likely to quarrel with me, than I with you. My regard for you is greater almost than I have words to express; but I do not choose to be always repeating it: write it down in the first leaf of your pocket-book, and never doubt of it again."

I talked to him of misery being "the doom of man," in this life, as displayed in his "Vanity of Human Wishes." Yet I observed that things were done upon the

[1] [I consider the pronunciation of this word, which Boswell justly makes an objection to, as provincial; but I think he must have misapprehended Dr. Johnson's "reason." There are many words, in which these three letters occur, that are pronounced similarly, *e. g. earn*, *learn*, &c.; nor would the single exception be an objection, as uniformity is not the *jus et norma loquendi* in English.—HALL.]

[2] In the age of Queen Elizabeth this word was frequently written, as doubtless it was pronounced, *hard*.—MALONE.

[3] [In Dodsley's collection, and in Miss Reynold's Recollections, the two last lines are thus given:

"Or Tadnor's marble wastes survey,
Or in yon roofless cloister stray."

But Bishop Percy, in his Reliques, vol i p. 264, corrects them as given in the text.—ED.]

supposition of happiness; grand houses were built, fine gardens were made, splendid places of publick amusement were contrived, and crowded with company. JOHNSON. "Alas, sir, these are only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh, it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced any where else. But, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think; but that the thoughts of each individual there would be distressing when alone." This reflection was experimentally just. The feeling of languor[1], which succeeds the animation of gaiety, is itself a very severe pain; and when the mind is then vacant, a thousand disappointments and vexations rush in and excruciate. Will not many even of my fairest readers allow this to be true?

I suggested, that being in love, and flattered with hopes of success; or having some favourite scheme in view for the next day, might prevent that wretchedness of which we had been talking. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it may sometimes be so as you suppose; but my conclusion is in general but too true."

While Johnson and I stood in calm conference by ourselves in Dr. Taylor's garden, at a pretty late hour in a serene autumn night, looking up to the heavens, I directed the discourse to the subject of a future state. My friend was in a placid aud most benignant frame of mind. "Sir," said he, "I do not imagine that all things will be made clear to us immediately after death, but that the ways of Providence will be explained to us very gradually." I ventured to ask him whether, although the words of some texts of Scripture seemed strong in support of the dreadful doctrine of an eternity of punishment, we might not hope that the denunciation was figurative, and would not literally be executed. JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to consider the intention of punishment in a future state. We have no reason to be sure that we shall then be no longer liable to offend against God. We do not know that even the angels are quite in a state of security; nay, we know that some of them have fallen. It may therefore, perhaps, be necessary, in order to preserve both men and angels in a state of rectitude, that they should have continually before them the punishment of those who have deviated from it; but we hope that by some other means a fall from rectitude may be prevented. Some of the texts of Scripture upon this subject are, as you observe, indeed strong; but they may admit of a mitigated interpretation." He talked to me upon this awful and delicate question in a gentle tone, and as if afraid to be decisive.

After supper I accompanied him to his apartment, and at my request he dictated to me an argument in favour of the negro who was then claiming his liberty, in an action in the court of session in Scotland. He had always been very zealous against slavery in every form, in which I with all deference thought that he discovered "a zeal without knowledge." Upon one occasion, when in company with some very grave men at Oxford, his toast was, "Here's to the next insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies." His violent prejudice against our West Indian and American settlers appeared whenever there was an opportunity. Towards the conclusion of his "Taxation no Tyranny," he says, "how is it that we hear the loudest *yelps* for liberty among the drivers of negroes?" and in his conversation with Mr. Wilkes[2] he asked, "Where did Beckford and Trecothick learn English?" That Trecothick could both speak and write good English is well known. I myself was favoured with his correspondence concerning the brave Corsicans. And that Beckford could speak it with a spirit of honest resolution even to his majesty, as his "faithful lord mayor of London," is commemorated by the noble monument erected to him in Guildhall.

The argument dictated by Dr. Johnson [will be found in the Appendix].

I record Dr. Johnson's argument fairly upon this particular case; where, perhaps, he was in the right. But I beg leave to enter my most solemn protest against his general doctrine with respect to the slave trade. For I will resolutely say, that his unfavourable notion of it was owing to prejudice, and imperfect or false information. The wild and dangerous attempt which has for some time been persisted in to obtain an act of our legislature, to abolish so very important and necessary a branch of commercial interest, must have been crushed at once, had not the insignificance of the zealots who vainly took the lead in it made the vast body of planters, merchants, and others, whose immense properties are involved in that trade, reasonably enough suppose that there could be no danger. The encourage-

[1] Pope mentions,

"Stretch'd on the rack of a too easy chair."

But I recollect a couplet quite apposite to my subject in "Virtue, an Ethick Epistle," a beautiful and instructive poem, by an anonymous writer, in 1758; who, treating of pleasure in excess, says,

Till languor, suffering on the rack of bliss,
Confess that man was never made for this."—BOSWELL.

[2] See *ante*, p. 76.—BOSWELL.

ment which the attempt has received excites my wonder and indignation; and though some men of superior abilities have supported it, whether from a love of temporary popularity when prosperous, or a love of general mischief when desperate, my opinion is unshaken. To abolish a *status*, which in all ages God has sanctioned, and man has continued, would not only be *robbery* to an innumerable class of our fellow-subjects, but it would be extreme cruelty to African savages, a portion of whom it saves from massacre, or intolerable bondage in their own country, and introduces into a much happier state of life; especially now when their passage to the West Indies and there treatment there is humanely regulated. To abolish that trade would be to

"——shut the gates of mercy on mankind."

Whatever may have passed elsewhere concerning it, the house of lords is wise and independent:

Intaminatis fulgèt honoribus;
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ.

I have read, conversed, and thought much upon the subject, and would recommend to all who are capable of conviction an excellent tract by my learned and ingenious friend, John Ranby, Esq., entitled "Doubts on the Abolition of the Slave Trade." To Mr. Ranby's "Doubts," I will apply Lord Chancellor Hardwicke's expression in praise of a Scotch law book, called "Dirleton's Doubts:" "HIS *doubts*," said his lordship, "are better than most people's *certainties*."

When I said now to Johnson, that I was afraid I kept him too late up, "No, sir," said he, "I do n't care though I sit all night with you." This was an animated speech from a man in his sixty-ninth year.

[Dr. Johnson, as Mrs. Piozzi relates, loved late hours extremely, or more properly hated early ones. Nothing was more terrifying to him than the idea of retiring to bed, which he never would call going to rest, or suffer another to call so. "I lie down," said he, "that my acquaintance may sleep; but I lie down to endure oppressive misery, and soon rise again to pass the night in anxiety and pain." By this pathetic manner, which no one ever possessed in so eminent a degree, he used to shock that lady from quitting his company, till she hurt her own health not a little by sitting up with him when she was herself far from well: nor was it an easy matter to oblige him even by compliance, for he always maintained that no one forbore their own gratifications for the sake of pleasing another, and if one *did* sit up it was probably to amuse one's self. Some right, however, he certainly had to say so, as he made his company exceedingly entertaining when he had once forced one, by his vehement lamentations and piercing reproofs, not to quit the room, but to sit quietly and make tea for him, as Mrs. Thrale often did in London till four o'clock in the morning. At Streatham, she managed better, having always some friend who was kind enough to engage him in talk, and favour her retreat.]

Piozzi, p. 94-5.

[Indeed, he has been known to say, "Whoever thinks of going to bed before twelve o'clock is a scoundrel." Having nothing in particular to do himself, and having none of his time appropriated, he was a troublesome guest to persons who had much to do.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 211.

He rose too as unwillingly as he went to bed.]

Had I been as attentive not to displease him as I ought to have been, I know not but this vigil might have been fulfilled; but I unluckily entered upon the controversy concerning the right of Great Britain to tax America, and attempted to argue in favour of our fellow-subjects on the other side of the Atlantick. I insisted that America might be very well governed, and made to yield sufficient revenue by the means of *influence*, as exemplified in Ireland, while the people might be pleased with the imagination of their participating of the British constitution, by having a body of representatives, without whose consent money could not be exacted from them. Johnson could not bear my thus opposing his avowed opinion, which he had exerted himself with an extreme degree of heat to enforce; and the violent agitation into which he was thrown, while answering, or rather reprimanding me, alarmed me so, that I heartily repented of my having unthinkingly introduced the subject. I myself, however, grew warm, and the change was great, from the calm state of philosophical discussion in which we had a little before been pleasingly employed.

I talked of the corruption of the British parliament, in which I alleged that any question, however unreasonable or unjust, might be carried by a venal majority; and I spoke with high admiration of the Roman senate, as if composed of men sincerely desirous to resolve what they should think best for their country. My friend would allow no such character to the Roman senate; and he maintained that the British parliament was not corrupt, and that there was no occasion to corrupt its members asserting, that there was hardly ever any question of great importance before parliament, any question in which a man might not very well vote either upon one side or the other. He said there had been none in his time except that respecting America.

We were fatigued by the contest, which was produced by my want of caution; and he was not then in the humour to slide into easy and cheerful talk. It therefore so happened, that we were after an hour or two very willing to separate and go to bed.

On Wednesday, September 24, I went into Dr. Johnson's room before he got up, and finding that the storm of the preceding night was quite laid, I sat down upon his bed-side, and he talked with as much readiness and good humour as ever. He recommended to me to plant a considerable part of a large moorish farm which I had purchased, and he made several calculations of the expense and profit; for he delighted in exercising his mind on the science of numbers. He pressed upon me the importance of planting at the first in a very sufficient manner, quoting the saying, "*In bello non licet bis errare;*" and adding, "this is equally true in planting."

I spoke with gratitude of Dr. Taylor's hospitality; and as evidence that it was not on account of his good table alone that Johnson visited him often, I mentioned a little anecdote which had escaped my friend's recollection, and at hearing which repeated, he smiled. One evening when I was sitting with him, Frank delivered this message: "Sir, Dr. Taylor sends his compliments to you, and begs you will dine with him to-morrow. He has got a hare." "My compliments," said Johnson, "and I'll dine with him—hare or rabbit."

After breakfast I departed, and pursued my journey northwards.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Ashbourne, 25th Sept. 1777.

Letters, v. i. p. 384, 390. "Boswell is gone, and is, I hope, pleased that he has been here; though to look on any thing with pleasure is not very common. He has been gay and good-humoured in his usual way, but we have not agreed upon any other expedition. He had spent more money than he intended, and I supplied him; my deficiencies are again made up by Mr. Thrale's bill, for which I thank him."]

And again.

["Ashbourne, 29th Sept. 1777.

"Boswell, while he was here, saw Keddlestone and the silk-mills, and took Chatsworth in his way home. He says, his wife does not love me quite well yet, though we have made a formal peace. He kept his journal very diligently; but then what was there to journalise? I should be glad to see what he says of . . . .[1]. I think I told you that I took him to Ilam[2]."]

I took my post-chaise from the Green Man, a very good inn at Ashbourne, the mistress of which, a mighty civil gentlewoman, courtesying very low, presented me with an engraving of the sign of her house; to which she had subjoined, in her own hand-writing, an address in such singular simplicity of style, that I have preserved it pasted upon one of the boards of my original Journal at this time, and shall here insert it for the amusement of my readers:

"M. Killingley's duty waits upon Mr Boswell, is exceedingly obliged to him for this favour; whenever he comes this way, hopes for a continuance of the same. Would Mr. Boswell name the house to his extensive acquaintance, it would be a singular favour conferred on one who has it not in her power to make any other return but her most grateful thanks, and sincerest prayers for his happiness in time, and in a blessed eternity.

"Tuesday morning."

From this meeting at Ashbourne I derived a considerable accession to my Johnsonian store. I communicated my original Journal to Sir William Forbes, in whom I have always placed deserved confidence; and what he wrote to me concerning it is so much to my credit as the biographer of Johnson, that my readers will, I hope, grant me their indulgence for here inserting it: "It is not once or twice going over it," says Sir William, "that will satisfy me, for I find in it a high degree of instruction as well as entertainment; and I derive more benefit from Dr. Johnson's admirable discussions than I should be able to draw from his personal conversation; for I suppose there is not a man in the world to whom he discloses his sentiments so freely as to yourself."

I cannot omit a curious circumstance which occurred at Edenser-inn, close by Chatsworth, to survey the magnificence of which I had gone a considerable way out of my road to Scotland. The inn was then kept by a very jolly landlord, whose name, I think, was Malton. He happened to mention that "the celebrated Dr. Johnson had been in his house." I inquired *who* this Dr. Johnson was, that I might hear my host's notion of him. "Sir," said he, "Johnson, the great writer; *Oddity*, as they call him. He's the greatest writer in England; he writes for the ministry; he has a correspondence abroad, and lets them know what's going on."

My friend, who had a thorough dependence upon the authenticity of my relation without any *embellishment*, as *falsehood* or *fiction* is too gently called, laughed a good deal at this representation of himself.

[1] [No doubt Dr. Taylor.—ED.]

[2] [Printed in the *Letters* by mistake *Ham.*—ED.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.
"13th October. 1777.

'Though I am still at Ashbourne, I receive your dear letters that come to Lichfield, and you continue that direction, for I think to get thither as soon as I can

* * * * * *

"I cannot but think on your kindness and my *master's*. Life has, upon the whole, fallen short, very short, of my early expectation; but the acquisition of such a friendship, at an age when new friendships are seldom acquired, is something better than the general course of things gives man a right to expect. I think on it with great delight.—I am not very apt to be delighted."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 6, 10, 16.

"TO MRS. THRALE.
"Lichfield, 22d October, 1777.

"I am come, at last, to Lichfield, and am really glad that I have got away from a place where there was indeed no evil, but very little good. You may, I believe, write once to Lichfield after you receive this, but after that it will be best to direct to London.

* * * * *

"My visit to Stowhill has been paid. I have seen there a collection of misery. Mrs. Aston paralytick, Mrs. Walmsley lame, Mrs. Hervey blind, and I think another lady deaf. Even such is life.

"I hope dear Mrs. Aston is a little better; it is, however, very little. She was, I believe, glad to see me; and to have any body glad to see me is a great pleasure [1]."

"TO MRS. THRALE.
"Lichfield, 29th Oct. 1777.

"Though after my last letter I might justly claim an interval of rest, yet I write again to tell you, that for this turn you will hear but once more from Lichfield. This day is Wednesday—on Saturday I shall write again, and on Monday I shall set out to seek adventures; for you know—

None but the brave desert the fair.

"On Monday we hope to see Birmingham, the seat of the mechanick arts; and I know not whether our next stage will be Oxford, the mansion of the liberal arts; or London, the residence of all the arts together. The chymists call the world *Academia Paracelsi;* my ambition is to be his fellow-student—to see the works of nature, and hear the lectures of truth. To London, therefore! London may, perhaps, fill me; and I hope to fill my part of London."]

[1] "Mr. Johnson sends his compliments to the ladies at Stowhill, of whom he would have taken a more formal leave, but that he was willing to spare a ceremony which he hopes would have been no pleasure to them, and would have been painful to himself."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. ASTON
"London, 20th Nov. 1777

"DEAR MADAM,—Through Birmingham and Oxford I got without any difficulty or disaster to London, though not in so short a time as I expected, for I did not reach Oxford before the second day. I came home very much incommoded by obstructed respiration; but by vigorous methods am something better. I have since been at Brighthelmstone, and am now designing to settle.

Pem MS.

"Different things, madam, are fit for different people. It is fit for me to settle, and for you to move. I wish I could hear of you at Bath; but I am afraid that is hardly to be expected from your resolute inactivity My next hope is that you will endeavour to grow well where you are. I cannot help thinking that I saw a visible amendment between the time when I left you to go to Ashbourne, and the time when I came back. I hope you will go on mending and mending, to which exercise and cheerfulness will very much contribute. Take care, therefore, dearest madam, to be busy and cheerful

"I have great confidence in the care and conversation of dear Mrs. Gastrell. It is very much the interest of all that know her that she should continue well, for she is one of few people that has the proper regard for those that are sick. She was so kind to me that I hope I never shall forget it, and if it be troublesome to you to write, I shall hope that she will do me another act of kindness by answering this letter; for I beg that I may hear from you by some hand or another I am, madam, your most obedient servant.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.
"London, 20th Nov. 1777.

"DEAR LOVE,—You ordered me to write you word when I came home. I have been for some days at Brighthelmstone, and came back on Tuesday night.

Pearson MSS.

"You know that when I left you I was not well; I have taken physick very diligently, and am perceptibly better; so much better that I hope by care and perseverance to recover, and see you again from time to time.

"Mr. Nollekens, the statuary, has had my direction to send you a cast of my head. I will pay the carriage when we meet. Let me know how you like it; and what the ladies of your rout say to it. I have heard different opinions. I cannot think where you can put it.

"I found every body here well. Miss [Thrale] has a mind to be womanly, and her womanhood does not set well upon her.

"Please to make my compliments to all

the ladies and all the gentlemen to whom I owe them, that is, to a great part of the town. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON[1].

"Edinburgh, 29th Sept. 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—By the first post I inform you of my safe arrival at my own house, and that I had the comfort of finding my wife and children all in good health.

"When I look back upon our late interview, it appears to me to have answered expectation better than almost any scheme of happiness that I ever put in execution. My Journal is stored with wisdom and wit; and my memory is filled with the recollection of lively and affectionate feelings, which now, I think, yield me more satisfaction than at the time when they were first excited. I have experienced this upon other occasions. I shall be obliged to you if you will explain it to me; for it seems wonderful that pleasure should be more vivid at a distance than when near. I wish you may find yourself in a humour to do me this favour; but I flatter myself with no strong hope of it; for I have observed, that unless upon very serious occasions, your letters to me are not *answers* to those which I write."

(I then expressed much uneasiness that I had mentioned to him the name of the gentleman who had told me the story so much to his disadvantage, the truth of which he had completely refuted; for that my having done so might be interpreted as a breach of confidence, and offend one whose society I valued: therefore earnestly requesting that no notice might be taken of it to any body, till I should be in London, and have an opportunity to talk it over with the gentleman.)

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 29th Nov. 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—You will wonder, or you have wondered, why no letter has come from me. What you wrote at your return had in it such a strain of cowardly caution as gave me no pleasure. I could not well do what you wished; I had no need to vex you with a refusal. I have seen Mr. [Beauclerk], and as to him have set all right, without any inconvenience, so far as I know, to you. Mrs. Thrale had forgot the story. You may now be at ease.

"And at ease I certainly wish you, for the kindness that you showed in coming so long a journey to see me. It was pity to keep you so long in pain, but, upon reviewing the matter, I do not see what I could have done better than I did.

"I hope you found at your return my dear enemy and all her little people quite well, and had no reason to repent of your journey. I think on it with great gratitude.

"I was not well when you left me at the doctor's, and I grew worse; yet I staid on, and at Lichfield was very ill. Travelling, however, did not make me worse; and when I came to London, I complied with a summons to go to Brighthelmstone, where I saw Beauclerk, and staid three days.

"Our club has recommenced last Friday, but I was not there. Langton has another wench[2]. Mrs. Thrale is in hopes of a young brewer. They got by their trade last year a very large sum, and their expenses are proportionate.

"Mrs. Williams's health is very bad. And I have had for some time a very difficult and laborious respiration; but I am better by purges, abstinence, and other methods. I am yet, however, much behindhand in my health and rest.

"Dr. Blair's sermons are now universally commended; but let him think that I had the honour of first finding and first praising his excellencies. I did not stay to add my voice to that of the publick.

"My dear friend, let me thank you once more for your visit: you did me great honour, and I hope met with nothing that displeased you. I staid long at Ashbourne, not much pleased, yet awkward at departing. I then went to Lichfield, where I found my friend at Stowhill[3] very dangerously diseased. Such is life. Let us try to pass it well, whatever it be, for there is surely something beyond it.

"Well, now, I hope all is well; write as soon as you can to, dear sir, your affectionate servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 29th Nov. 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—This day's post has at length relieved me from much uneasiness, by bringing me a letter from you. I was, indeed, doubly uneasy; on my own account and yours. I was very anxious to be secured against any bad consequences from my imprudence in mentioning the gentleman's name who had told me a story to your disadvantage; and as I could hardly suppose it possible that you would delay so long to make me easy, unless you were ill, I was not a little apprehensive about you. You must not be offended when I venture to tell you that you appear to me to have been too rigid upon this occasion. The '*cowardly caution which gave you no pleasure*,' was suggested to me by a friend here, to whom I mentioned the strange story, and the detection of its falsity, as an

[1] [This letter is put a little out of its chronological place, to keep it near the answer.—ED.]

[2] A daughter born to him.—BOSWELL.

[3] Mrs. Aston.—BOSWELL.

instance how one may be deceived by what is apparently very good authority. But, as I am still persuaded, that as I might have obtained the truth without mentioning the gentleman's name, it was wrong in me to do it, I cannot see that you are just in blaming my caution. But if you were ever so just in your disapprobation, might you not have dealt more tenderly with me?

"I went to Auchinleck about the middle of October, and passed some time with my father very comfortably.

* * * * *

"I am engaged in a criminal prosecution against a country schoolmaster, for indecent behaviour to his female scholars. There is no statute against such abominable conduct; but it is punishable at common law. I shall be obliged to you for your assistance in this extraordinary trial. I ever am, my dear sir, your faithful humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

About this time I wrote to Johnson, giving him an account of the decision of the *negro cause*, by the court of session, which by those who hold even the mildest and best regulated slavery in abomination (of which number I do not hesitate to declare that I am none) should be remembered with high respect, and to the credit of Scotland; for it went upon a much broader ground than the case of *Somerset*, which was decided in England[1]; being truly the general question, whether a perpetual obligation of service to one master in any mode should be sanctified by the law of a free country. A negro, then called *Joseph Knight*, a native of Africa, having been brought to Jamaica in the usual course of the slave trade, and purchased by a Scotch gentleman in that island, had attended his master to Scotland, where it was officiously suggested to him that he would be found entitled to his liberty without any limitation. He accordingly brought his action, in the course of which the advocates on both sides did themselves great honour. Mr. Maclaurin has had the praise of Johnson, for his argument[2] in favour of the negro, and Mr. Macconochie[3] distinguished himself on the same side, by his ingenuity and extraordinary research. Mr. Cullen, on the part of the master, discovered good information and sound reasoning; in which he was well supported by Mr. James Ferguson, remarkable for a manly understanding, and a knowledge both of books and of the world But I cannot too highly praise the speech which Mr. Henry Dundas generously contributed to the cause of the sooty stranger Mr. Dundas's Scottish accent, which has been so often in vain obtruded as an objection to his powerful abilities in parliament, was no disadvantage to him in his own country. And I do declare, that upon this memorable question he impressed me, and I believe all his audience, with such feelings as were produced by some of the most eminent orations of antiquity. This testimony I liberally give to the excellence of an old friend, with whom it has been my lot to differ very widely upon many political topicks: yet I persuade myself without malice. A great majority of the lords of session decided for the negro. But four of their number, the Lord President, Lord Elliock, Lord Monboddo, and Lord Covington, resolutely maintained the lawfulness of a *status*, which has been acknowledged in all ages and countries, and that when freedom flourished, as in old Greece and Rome.

["TO MRS. GASTRELL[4].

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 23d Dec. 1777.

"DEAR MADAM,—Your long silence portended no good; yet I hope the danger is not so near as our anxiety sometimes makes us fear. Winter is indeed to all those that any distemper has enfeebled a very troublesome time; but care and caution may pass safely through it, and from spring and summer some relief is always to be hoped. When I came hither I fell to taking care of myself, and by physick and opium had the constriction that obstructed my breath very suddenly removed. My nights still continue very laborious and tedious, but they do not grow worse. Pemb. MS.

"I do not ask you, dear madam, to take care of Mrs. Aston; I know how little you want any such exhortations; but I earnestly entreat her to take care of herself. Many lives are prolonged by a diligent attention to little things, and I am far from thinking it unlikely that she may grow better by degrees. However, it is her duty to try, and when we do our duty we have reason to hope. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"27th December, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,—This is the time of the year in which all express their good wishes

[1] See State Trials, vol. xi. p. 339, and Mr. Hargrave's argument.—BOSWELL.

[2] The motto to it was happily chosen:

"Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses,"

I cannot avoid mentioning a circumstance no less strange than true, that a brother advocate in considerable practice [Mr. Wright], but of whom it certainly cannot be said, *Ingenuas didicit fideliter artes* asked Mr. Maclaurin, with a face of flippant assurance, "Are these words your own?"—BOSWELL.

[3] [Afterwards a lord of session, by the title of Lord Meadowbank, and father of the present Lord Meadowbank.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 46.—ED.]

to their friends, and I send mine to you and your family. May your lives be long, happy, and good. I have been much out of order, but, I hope, do not grow worse.

"The crime of the schoolmaster whom you are engaged to prosecute is very great, and may be suspected to be too common. In our law it would be a breach of the peace and a misdemeanour: that is, a kind of indefinite crime, not capital, but punishable at the discretion of the court. You cannot want matter: all that needs to be said will easily occur.

"Mr. Shaw, the authour of the Gaëlick Grammar, desires me to make a request for him to Lord Eglintoune, that he may be appointed chaplain to one of the new-raised regiments.

"All our friends are as they were; little has happened to them of either good or bad. Mrs. Thrale ran a great black hair-dressing pin into her eye; but by great evacuation she kept it from inflaming, and it is almost well. Miss Reynolds has been out of order, but is better. Mrs. Williams is in a very poor state of health.

"If I should write on, I should, perhaps, write only complaints, and therefore I will content myself with telling you, that I love to think on you, and to hear from you; and that I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 8th Jan. 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—Your congratulations upon a new year are mixed with complaint: mine must be so too. My wife has for some time been ill, having been confined to the house these three months by a severe cold, attended with alarming symptoms."

(Here I gave a particular account of the distress which the person, upon every account most dear to me, suffered; and of the dismal state of apprehension in which I now was: adding that I never stood more in need of his consoling philosophy.)

"Did you ever look at a book written by Wilson, a Scotchman, under the Latin name of *Volusenus*, according to the custom of literary men at a certain period? It is entitled "*De Animi Tranquillitate.*" I earnestly desire tranquillity. *Bona res quies*; but I fear I shall never attain it; for, when unoccupied, I grow gloomy, and occupation agitates me to feverishness.

* * * * * *

"I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"24th January, 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—To a letter so interesting as your last, it is proper to return some answer, however little I may be disposed to write.

"Your alarm at your lady's illness was reasonable, and not disproportionate to the appearance of the disorder. I hope your physical friend's conjecture is now verified, and all fear of a consumption at an end: a little care and exercise will then restore her. London is a good air for ladies; and if you bring her hither, I will do for her what she did for me—I will retire from my apartments for her accommodation. Behave kindly to her, and keep her cheerful.

"You always seem to call for tenderness Know then, that in the first month of the present year I very highly esteem and very cordially love you. I hope to tell you this at the beginning of every year as long as we live; and why should we trouble ourselves to tell or hear it oftener?

"Tell Veronica, Euphemia, and Alexander, that I wish them, as well as their parents, many happy years.

"You have ended the negro's cause much to my mind. Lord Auchinleck and dear Lord Hailes were on the side of liberty. Lord Hailes's name reproaches me; but if he saw my languid neglect of my own affairs, he would rather pity than resent my neglect of his. I hope to mend, *ut et mihi vivam et amicis.* I am, dear sir, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"My service to my fellow-traveller, Joseph."

Johnson maintained a long and intimate friendship with Mr. Welch, who succeeded the celebrated Henry Fielding as one of his majesty's justices of the peace for Westminster; kept a regular office for the police of that great district; and discharged his important trust, for many years, faithfully and ably. Johnson, who had an eager and unceasing curiosity to know human life in all its variety, told me, that he attended Mr Welch in his office for a whole winter, to hear the examinations of the culprits; but that he found an almost uniform tenor of misfortune, wretchedness, and profligacy. Mr. Welch's health being impaired, he was advised to try the effect of a warm climate, and Johnson, by his interest with Mr. Chamier, procured him leave of absence to go to Italy, and a promise that the pension or salary of two hundred pounds a year, which government allowed him, should not be discontinued. Mr. Welch accordingly went abroad, accompanied by his daughter Anne, a young lady of uncommon talents and literature.

"TO SAUNDERS WELCH, ESQ., AT THE ENGLISH COFFEE-HOUSE, ROME.

"3d February, 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—To have suffered one of my best and dearest friends to pass almost two years in foreign countries without a letter, has a very shameful appearance of

mattention. But the truth is, that there was no particular time in which I had any thing particular to say; and general expressions of good will, I hope, our long friendship is grown too solid to want.

"Of public affairs you have information from the newspapers wherever you go, for the English keep no secret; and of other things Mrs. Nollekens informs you. My intelligence could, therefore, be of no use; and Miss Nancy's letters made it unnecessary to write to you for information; I was likewise for some time out of humour, to find that motion and nearer approaches to the sun did not restore your health so fast as I expected. Of your health the accounts have lately been more pleasing; and I have the gratification of imagining to myself a length of years which I hope you have gained, and of which the enjoyment will be improved by a vast accession of images and observations which your journeys and various residence have enabled you to make and accumulate. You have travelled with this felicity, almost peculiar to yourself, that your companion is not to part from you at your journey's end; but you are to live on together, to help each other's recollections, and to supply each other's omissions. The world has few greater pleasures than that which two friends enjoy, in tracing back, at some distant time, those transactions and events through which they have passed together. One of the old man's miseries is, that he cannot easily find a companion able to partake with him of the past. You and your fellow-traveller have this comfort in store, that your conversation will be not easily exhausted; one will always be glad to say what the other will always be willing to hear.

"That you may enjoy this pleasure long, your health must have your constant attention. I suppose you propose to return this year. There is no need of haste: do not come hither before the height of summer, that you may fall gradually into the inconveniences of your native clime. July seems to be the proper month. August and September will prepare you for the winter. After having travelled so far to find health, you must take care not to lose it at home; and I hope a little care will effectually preserve it.

"Miss Nancy has doubtless kept a constant and copious journal. She must not expect to be welcome when she returns without a great mass of information. Let her review her journal often, and set down what she finds herself to have omitted, that she may trust to memory as little as possible, for memory is soon confused by a quick succession of things; and she will grow every day less confident of the truth of her own narratives, unless she can recur to some written memorials. If she has satisfied herself with hints, instead of full representations, let her supply the deficiencies now while her memory is yet fresh, and while her father's memory may help her. If she observes this direction, she will not have travelled in vain; for she will bring home a book with which she may entertain herself to the end of life. If it were not now too late, I would advise her to note the impressions which the first sight of any thing new and wonderful made upon her mind. Let her now set her thoughts down as she can recollect them; for faint as they may already be, they will grow every day fainter

"Perhaps I do not flatter myself unreasonably when I imagine that you may wish to know something of me. I can gratify your benevolence with no account of health. The hand of time, or of disease, is very heavy upon me. I pass restless and uneasy nights, harassed with convulsions of my breast, and flatulencies at my stomach; and restless nights make heavy days. But nothing will be mended by complaints, and therefore I will make an end. When we meet, we will try to forget our cares and our maladies, and contribute, as we can, to the cheerfulness of each other. If I had gone with you, I believe I should have been better; but I do not know that it was in my power. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

This letter, while it gives admirable advice how to travel to the best advantage, and will therefore be of very general use, is another eminent proof of Johnson's warm and affectionate heart[1].

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER

"19th February, 1778.

"DEAR MADAM,—I have several little things to mention which I have hitherto neglected. Pearson MSS.

"You judged rightly in thinking that the bust[2] would not please. It is condemned by Mrs. Thrale, Mrs. Reynolds, and Mrs. Garrick; so that your disapprobation is not singular.

"These things have never cost me any

[1] The friendship between Mr. Welch and him was unbroken. Mr. Welch died not many months before him, and bequeathed him five guineas for a ring, which Johnson received with tenderness, as a kind memorial. His regard was constant for his friend Mr. Welch's daughters; of whom Jane is married to Mr. Nollekens, the statuary, whose merit is too well known to require any praise from me.—BOSWELL. [See a great deal about Miss Anne in Miss Hawkins's *Memoirs*.—ED.]

[2] [This bust, and the walking-stick mentioned by Boswell, are now in the possession of Mrs Pearson, of Hill Ridware, near Lichfield.—HARWOOD.]

thing, so that I do not much know the price. My bust was made for the Exhibition, and shown for honour of the artist, who is a man of reputation above any of the other sculptors. To be modelled in clay costs, I believe, twenty guineas; but the casts, when the model is made, are of no great price; whether a guinea or two guineas, I cannot tell.

"When you complained for want of oysters, I ordered you a barrel weekly for a month; you sent me word sooner that you had enough, but I did not countermand the rest. If you could not eat them, could you not give them away? When you want any thing send me word.

"I am very poorly, and have very restless and oppressive nights, but always hope for better. Pray for me. I am your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.
"Edinburgh, 26th February, 1778.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Why I have delayed, for near a month, to thank you for your last affectionate letter, I cannot say; for my mind has been in better health these three weeks than for some years past. I believe I have evaded till I could send you a copy of Lord Hailes's opinion on the negro's cause, which he wishes you to read, and correct any errors that there may be in the language; for, says he, 'we live in a critical, though not a learned age; and I seek to screen myself under the shield of Ajax.' I communicated to him your apology for keeping the sheets of his 'Annals' so long. He says, 'I am sorry to see that Dr. Johnson is in a state of languor. Why should a sober Christian, neither an enthusiast nor a fanatick, be very merry or very sad?' I envy his lordship's comfortable constitution; but well do I know that languor and dejection will afflict the best, however excellent their principles. I am in possession of Lord Hailes's opinion in his own handwriting, and have had it for some time. My excuse then for procrastination must be, that I wanted to have it copied; and I have now put that off so long, that it will be better to bring it with me than send it, as I shall probably get you to look at it sooner when I solicit you in person.

"My wife, who is, I thank God, a good dea. better, is much obliged to you for your very polite and courteous offer of your apartment: but, if she goes to London, it will be best for her to have lodgings in the more airy vicinity of Hyde-park. I, however, doubt much if I shall be able to prevail with her to accompany me to the metropolis; for she is so different from you and me, that she dislikes travelling; and she is so anxious about her children, that she thinks she should be unhappy if at a distance from them. She therefore wishes rather to go to some country place in Scotland, where she can have them with her.

"I purpose being in London about the 20th of next month, as I think it creditable to appear in the house of lords as one of Douglas's counsel, in the great and last competition between Duke Hamilton and him.

* * * * * *

"I am sorry poor Mrs. Williams is so ill: though her temper is unpleasant, she has always been polite and obliging to me. I wish many happy years to good Mr. Levett, who, I suppose, holds his usual place at your breakfast-table[1]. I ever am, my dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,
"JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.
"Edinburgh, 28th Feb. 1778.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You are at present busy amongst the English poets, preparing, for the public instruction and entertainment, prefaces biographical and critical. It will not, therefore, be out of season to appeal to you for the decision of a controversy which has arisen between a lady and me concerning a passage in Parnell. That poet tells us, that his hermit quitted his cell

'———to know the world by sight,
To find if *books* or *swains* report it right;
(For yet by *swains alone* the world he knew,
Whose feet came wand'ring o'er the nightly dew).'

I maintain, that there is an inconsistency here; for as the hermit's notions of the world were formed from the reports both of *books* and *swains*, he could not justly be said to know by *swains alone*. Be pleased to judge between us, and let us have your reasons[2].

"What do you say to 'Taxation no Tyranny,' now, after Lord North's declaration, or confession, or whatever else his conciliatory speech should be called? I never differed from you in politicks but up-

[1] Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore, humorously observed, that Levett used to breakfast on the crust of a roll, which Johnson, after tearing out the crum for himself, *threw* to his humble friend.—BOSWELL. Perhaps the word *threw* is here too strong. Dr. Johnson never treated Levett with contempt; it is clear indeed, from various circumstances, that he had great kindness for him. I have often seen Johnson at breakfast, accompanied, or rather attended, by Levett, who had always the management of the tea-kettle.—MALONE. [Sir J. Hawkins states, that "Dr. Johnson frequently observed that Levett was indebted to him for nothing more than house-room, his share in a penny loaf at breakfast, and now and then a dinner on a Sunday."—ED.]

[2] See this subject discussed in a subsequent page, under May 3 1779.—MALONE

on two points,—the Middlesex election, and the taxation of the Americans by the British houses of representatives. There is a *charm* in the word *parliament*, so I avoid it. As I am a steady and a warm tory, I regret that the king does not see it to be better for him to receive constitutional supplies from his American subjects by the voice of their own assemblies, where his royal person is represented, than through the medium of his British subjects. I am persuaded that the power of the crown, which I wish to increase, would be greater when in contact with all its dominions, than if 'the rays of regal bounty[1] were 'to shine' upon America through that dense and troubled body a modern British parliament. But, enough of this subject; for your angry voice at Ashbourne upon it still sounds awful 'in my mind's *ears*.'—I ever am, my dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.
"5th March, 1778.

Mont. MS. "MADAM,—And so you are alarmed, naughty lady? You might know that I was ill enough when Mr. Thrale brought you my excuse. Could you think that I missed the honour of being at (your) table for any slight reason? But you (have) too many to miss any one of us, and I am (proud) to be remembered at last.

"I am much better. A little cough (still) remains which will not confine me. To houses (like yours) of great delicacy I am not willing to bring it.

"Now, dear madam, we must talk of business. Poor Davies, the bankrupt bookseller, is soliciting his friends to collect a small sum for the re-purchase of part of his household stuff. Several of them gave him five guineas. It would be an honour to him to owe part of his relief to Mrs. Montagu.

"Let me thank you, madam, once more for your inquiry; you have, perhaps, among your numerous train not one that values a kind word or a kind look more than, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.
"6th March, 1778.

"MADAM,—I hope Davies[2], who does not want wit, does not want gratitude, and then he will be almost as thankful for the bill as I am for the letter that enclosed it.

"If I do not lose, what I hope always to keep, my reverence for transcendent merit, I shall continue to be, with unalterable fidelity, madam, your most obliged, and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.
"Edinburgh, 12th March, 1778

"MY DEAR SIR,—The alarm of your late illness distressed me but a few hours; for on the evening of the day that it reached me, I found it contradicted in 'The London Chronicle,' which I could depend upon as authentick concerning you, Mr. Strahan being the printer of it. I did not see the paper in which 'the approaching extinction of a bright luminary' was announced. Sir William Forbes told me of it; and he says he saw me so uneasy, that he did not give me the report in such strong terms as he read it. He afterwards sent me a letter from Mr. Langton to him, which relieved me much. I am, however, not quite easy, as I have not heard from you; and now I shall not have that comfort before I see you, for I set out for London to-morrow before the post comes in. I hope to be with you on Wednesday morning: and I ever am, with the highest veneration, my dear sir, your most obliged, faithful, and affectionate humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

On Wednesday, March 18, I arrived in London, and was informed by good Mr. Francis, that his master was better, and was gone to Mr. Thrale's at Streatham, to which place I wrote to him, begging to know when he would be in town. He was not expected for some time; but next day, having called on Dr. Taylor, in Dean's yard, Westminster, I found him there, and was told he had come to town for a few hours. He met me with his usual kindness, but instantly returned to the writing of something on which he was employed when I came in, and on which he seemed much intent. Finding him thus engaged, I made my visit very short, and had no more of his conversation, except his expressing a serious regret that a friend of ours[3] was living at too much expense, considering how poor an appearance he made. "If," said he, "a man has splendour from his expense, if he spends his money in pride or in pleasure, he has value; but if he lets others spend it for him, which is most commonly the case, he has no advantage from it."

On Friday, March 20, I found him at his own house, sitting with Mrs. Williams, and was informed that the room formerly allot-

[1] Alluding to a line in his "Vanity of Human Wishes," describing Cardinal Wolsey in a state of elevation:

"Through him the rays of regal bounty shine." — BOSWELL.

[2] [Tom Davies, the bookseller, in whose behalf he more than once appealed to the charity of Mrs. Montagu.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Langton.—ED.]

ted to me was now appropriated to a charitable purpose; Mrs. Desmoulins[1], and, I think, her daughter, and a Miss Carmichael, being all lodged in it. Such was his humanity, and such his generosity, that Mrs. Desmoulins herself told me he allowed her half a guinea a week. Let it be remembered, that this was above a twelfth part of his pension.

His liberality, indeed, was at all periods of his life very remarkable. Mr. Howard, of Lichfield, at whose father's house Johnson had in his early years been kindly received, told me, that when he was a boy at the Charter-house, his father wrote to him to go and pay a visit to Mr. Samuel Johnson, which he accordingly did, and found him in an upper room, of poor appearance. Johnson received him with much courteousness, and talked a great deal to him, as to a schoolboy, of the course of his education, and other particulars. When he afterwards came to know and understand the high character of this great man, he recollected his condescension with wonder. He added, that when he was going away, Mr. Johnson presented him with half a guinea; and this, said Mr. Howard, was at a time when he probably had not another.

Ed. [Johnson's patience was as much tried by these inmates as his generosity. The dissensions that the Piozzi, p. 164. many odd[2] inhabitants of his house chose to live in distressed and mortified him exceedingly. He really was sometimes afraid of going home, because he was so sure to be met at the door with numberless complaints; and he used to lament pathetically to Mrs. Thrale, and to Mr. Sastres, the Italian master, who was much his favourite, that they made his life miserable from the impossibility he found of making theirs happy, when every favour he bestowed on one was wormwood to the rest. If, however, Mrs. Thrale ventured to blame their ingratitude, and condemn their conduct, he would instantly set about softening the one and justifying the other; and finished commonly by telling her, that she knew not how to make allowances for situations she never experienced.]

We retired from Mrs. Williams to another room. Tom Davies soon after joined us. He had now unfortunately failed in his circumstances, and was much indebted to Dr. Johnson's kindness for obtaining for him many alleviations of his distress. After he went away, Johnson blamed his folly in quitting the stage, by which he and his wife got five hundred pounds a year. I said, I believed it was owing to Churchill's attack upon him,

"He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone."

Johnson. "I believe so too, sir. But what a man is he who is to be driven from the stage by a line? Another line would have driven him from his shop!"

I told him that I was engaged as counsel at the bar of the house of commons to oppose a road-bill in the county of Stirling, and asked him what mode he would advise me to follow in addressing such an audience. Johnson. "Why, sir, you must provide yourself with a good deal of extraneous matter, which you are to produce occasionally, so as to fill up the time; for you must consider, that they do not listen much If you begin with the strength of your cause, it may be lost before they begin to listen. When you catch a moment of attention, press the merits of the question upon them." He said, as to one point of the merits, that he thought "it would be a wrong thing to deprive the small landholders of the privilege of assessing themselves for making and repairing the high roads; *it was destroying a certain portion of liberty without a good reason, which was always a bad thing.*" When I mentioned this observation next day to Mr. Wilkes, he pleasantly said, "What! does *he* talk of liberty? *Liberty* is as ridiculous in *his* mouth as *religion* in *mine*." Mr. Wilkes's advice as to the best mode of speaking at the bar of the house of commons was not more respectful towards the senate than that of Dr. Johnson. "Be as impudent as you can, as merry as you can, and say whatever comes uppermost. Jack Lee[3] is the best

[1] Daughter of Dr. Swinfen, Johnson's godfather, and widow of Mr. Desmoulins, a writing-master.—Boswell.

[2] [In Malone's MS. notes, he, on more than one occasion, reprobates "the misrepresentations," as he calls them, "of this mendacious lady," on the subject of Johnson's inmates and pensioners; and he particularly notices this passage, from which, he says, "it might be inferred that he had *twenty* in his house, whereas Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Desmoulins occasionally, and Levett, with his two servants, composed the whole." This is the style in which Malone and Boswell usually treated Mrs. Piozzi; and, as generally happens, she is right, or, at least, justifiable in what she says. Surely, in this particular case, when we find that, besides Dr. Johnson, his house contained Mr. Levett, Mrs. Williams, Miss Carmichael, Mrs. Desmoulins, Miss Desmoulins, a negro, and a female servant, Mrs. Piozzi was justified in talking of his "*many* inmates."—Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Lee, afterwards solicitor-general in the Rockingham administration. "He was a man of strong parts, though of coarse manners, and who never hesitated to express in the coarsest language whatever he thought."—*Wraxall's Mem.* vol. ii. p. 237. He was particularly distinguished by the violence of his invective against the person

heard there of any counsel; and he is the most impudent dog, and always abusing us."

In my interview with Dr. Johnson this evening, I was quite easy, quite as his companion; upon which I find in my journal the following reflection: "So ready is my mind to suggest matter for dissatisfaction, that I felt a sort of regret that I was so easy. I missed that awful reverence with which I used to contemplate MR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, in the complex magnitude of his literary, moral, and religious character. I have a wonderful superstitious love of *mystery;* when, perhaps, the truth is, that it is owing to the cloudy darkness of my own mind. I should be glad that I am more advanced in my progress of being, so that I can view Dr. Johnson with a steadier and clearer eye. My dissatisfaction to-night was foolish. Would it not be foolish to regret that we shall have less mystery in a future state? That 'we now see in a glass darkly,' but shall 'then see face to face!?'" This reflection, which I thus freely communicate, will be valued by the thinking part of my readers, who may have themselves experienced a similar state of mind.

He returned next day to Streatham, to Mr. Thrale's; where, as Mr. Strahan once complained to me, "he was in a great measure absorbed from the society of his old friends." I was kept in London by business, and wrote to him on the 27th, that "a separation from him for a week, when we were so near, was equal to a separation for a year, when we were at four hundred miles distance." I went to Streatham on Monday, March 30. Before he appeared, Mrs. Thrale made a very characteristical remark: "I do not know for certain what will please Dr. Johnson: but I know for certain that it will displease him to praise any thing, even what he likes, extravagantly."

At dinner he laughed at querulous declamations against the age, on account of luxury,—increase of London,—scarcity of provisions,—and other such topicks. "Houses," said he, "will be built till rents fall; and corn is more plentiful now than ever it was."

I had before dinner repeated a ridiculous story told me by an old man, who had been a passenger with me in the stage-coach to-day. Mrs. Thrale, having taken occasion to allude to it in talking to me, called it "The story told you by the old *woman*." "Now, madam," said I, "give me leave to catch you in the fact: it was not an old *woman*, but an old *man*, whom I mentioned as having told me this." I presumed to take an opportunity, in the presence of Johnson, of showing this lively lady[2] how ready she was, unintentionally, to deviate from exact authenticity of narration.

Thomas à Kempis (he observed) must be a good book, as the world has opened its arms to receive it. It is said to have been printed, in one language or other, as many times as there have been months since it first came out[3]. I always was struck with this sentence in it: "Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be[4]."

He said, "I was angry with Hurd about Cowley for having published a selection of his works: but, upon better consideration, I think there is no impropriety in a man's publishing as much as he chooses of any authour, if he does not put the rest out of the way. A man, for instance, may print the Odes of Horace alone." He seemed to be in a more indulgent humour than when this subject was discussed between him and Mr. Murphy[5].

When we were at tea and coffee, there came in Lord Trimlestown, in whose family was an ancient Irish peerage, but it suffered by taking the generous side in the troubles of the last century[6]. He was a

and administration of Lord Shelburne in 1782.—ED.]

[1] [1 Cor. c. xiii. v. 12.—ED.]

[2] [If mistakes like this were all that Mr. Boswell could impute to Mrs. Thrale, he had better have spared his censures. The inaccuracy was evidently trifling; probably had no effect on the story, and might be involuntary, as Mrs. Thrale might not have distinctly heard whether Boswell had said *old man* or *old woman*. The editor notices these trifles to show the *animus*, the spirit in which Mr. Boswell is prone to distort Mrs. Thrale's character.—ED.]

[3] The first edition was in 1492. Between that period and 1792, according to this account, there were three thousand six hundred editions. But this is very improbable.—MALONE.

[4] The original passage is: Si non potes te talem facere, qualem vis, quomodo poteris alium ad tuum habere beneplacitum? De Imit. Christ. lib. i. cap. xvi.—J. BOSWELL.

[5] [See *ante*, p. 59.—ED.]

[6] Since this was written, the attainder has been reversed; and Nicholas Barnewall is now a peer of Ireland with this title. The person mentioned in the text had studied physick, and prescribed *gratis* to the poor. Hence arose the subsequent conversation.—MALONE. [We find in one of the magazines of the day, with the ironical title of "Remarkable Instance of Filial Affection," an advertisement dated 19th July, 1768, and signed "Thomas Barnewell," warning the public not to buy any timber trees which his father, Lord Trimlestown, is about to sell, as he is advised that *his father* is tenant for life, and has no right to sell such trees, and that the advertiser is resolved to put the *law in force* against any one who shall make a bargain contrary to his interest.—*Repertory*, vol. i. p. 118. Johnson's visitor must have been the *dutiful* son.—ED.]

man of pleasing conversation, and was accompanied by a young gentleman, his son.

I mentioned that I had in my possession the Life of Sir Robert Sibbald, the celebrated Scottish antiquary, and founder of the royal college of physicians at Edinburgh, in the original manuscript in his own hand writing; and that it was, I believed, the most natural and candid account of himself that ever was given by any man. As an instance, he tells that the Duke of Perth, then chancellor of Scotland, pressed him very much to come over to the Roman Catholick faith: that he resisted all his grace's arguments for a considerable time, till one day he felt himself, as it were, instantaneously convinced, and with tears in his eyes ran into the duke's arms, and embraced the ancient religion; that he continued very steady in it for some time, and accompanied his grace to London one winter, and lived in his household; that there he found the rigid fasting prescribed by the church very severe upon him; that this disposed him to reconsider the controversy; and having then seen that he was in the wrong, he returned to Protestantism. I talked of some time or other publishing this curious life. MRS. THRALE. "I think you had as well let alone that publication. To discover such weakness exposes a man when he is gone." JOHNSON. "Nay, it is an honest picture of human nature. How often are the primary motives of our greatest actions as small as Sibbald's for his reconversion!" MRS. THRALE. "But may they not as well be forgotten?" JOHNSON. "No, madam; a man loves to review his own mind. That is the use of a diary or journal." LORD TRIMLESTOWN. "True, sir. As the ladies love to see themselves in a glass, so a man likes to see himself in his journal." BOSWELL. "A very pretty allusion." JOHNSON. "Yes, indeed." BOSWELL. "And as a lady adjusts[1] her dress before a mirrour, a man adjusts his character by looking at his journal." I next year found the very same thought in Atterbury's "Funeral Sermon on Lady Cutts;" where, having mentioned her Diary, he says, "In this glass she every day dressed he mind." This is a proof of coincidence, and not of plagiarism; for I had never read that sermon before.

Next morning, while we were at breakfast, Johnson gave a very earnest recommendation of what he himself practised with the utmost conscientiousness: I mean a strict attention to truth[2], even in the most minute particulars. "Accustom your children," said he, "constantly to this: if a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, say that it happened at another, do not let it pass, but instantly check them: you do not know where deviation from truth will end." BOSWELL. "It may come to the door: and when once an account is at all varied in one circumstance, it may by degrees be varied so as to be totally different from what really happened." Our lively hostess, whose fancy was impapatient of the rein, fidgeted at this, and ventured to say, "Nay, this is too much. If Dr. Johnson should forbid me to drink tea, I would comply, as I should feel the restraint only twice a day; but little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a day, if one is not perpetually watching." JOHNSON. "Well, madam, and you *ought* to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth, than from intentional lying, that there is so much falsehood in the world."

In his review of Dr. Warton's "Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope," Johnson has given the following salutary caution upon this subject: "Nothing but experience could evince the frequency of false information, or enable any man to conceive that so many groundless reports should be propagated as every man of eminence may hear of himself. Some men relate what they think as what they know; some men of confused memories and habitual inaccuracy ascribe to one man what belongs to another; and some talk on without thought or care. A few men are sufficient to broach falsehoods, which are afterwards innocently diffused by successive relaters[3]." Had he lived to read what Sir John Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi have related concerning himself, how much would he have found his observation illustrated[4]! He was indeed so much impressed with the prevalence of falsehood, voluntary or unintentional, that I never knew any person who, upon hearing an extraordinary circumstance told, discovered more of the *incredulus odi*. He would say with a significant look and decisive tone, "It is not so.

[1] [Boswell seems much pleased with his own ingenuity, and the coincidence of thoughts between Bishop Atterbury and himself; but I don't quite understand *his* expression "a man adjusting his character." If he means that a man, by referring to his journal, as a lady to her looking-glass, improves his mind and conduct daily, I suspect there is more of fancy than truth in it. Men may consult their diaries and read their conduct in the day that is gone by; but, generally, to as little advantage as the person figured by St. James in a similar strain:—"He beholds his natural face in a glass; he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."—Chap. i. v. 23.—HALL.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 32.—ED.]

[3] Literary Magazine, 1756, p. 37.—BOSWELL.

[4] [Sir John Hawkins has not, it is believed, stated any thing *false*, though he may have

Do not tell this again " He inculcated upon al his friends the importance of perpetual vigilance against the slightest degrees of falsehood; the effect of which, as Sir Joshua Reynolds observed to me, has been, that all who were of his *school* are distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy, which they would not have possessed in the same degree if they had not been acquainted with Johnson.

Talking of ghosts, he said, " It is wonderful that five thousand years have now elapsed since the creation of the world, and still it is undecided whether or not there has ever been an instance of the spirit of any person appearing after death. All argument is against it; but all belief is for it."

He said, " John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk, as I do."

On Friday, April 3, I dined with him in London, in a company[2] where were present several eminent men, whom I shall not name, but distinguish their parts in the conversation by different letters.

F. " I have been looking at this famous antique marble dog of Mr. Jennings, valued at a thousand guineas, said to be Alcibiades's dog." JOHNSON. " His tail then must be docked. That was the mark of Alcibiades's dog." E. " A thousand guineas! The representation of no animal whatever is worth so much. At this rate, a dead dog would indeed be better than a living lion." JOHNSON. " Sir, it is not the worth of the thing, but of the skill in forming it, which is so highly estimated. Every thing that enlarges the sphere of human powers, that shows man he can do what he thought he could not do, is valuable. The first man who balanced a straw upon his nose; Johnson[3], who rode upon three horses at a time; in short, all such men deserve the applause of mankind, not on account of the use of what they did, but of the dexterity which they exhibited." BOSWELL. " Yet a misapplication of time and assiduity is not to be encouraged. Addison, in one of his 'Spectators,' commends the judgment of a king, who, as a suitable reward to a man that by long perseverance had attained to the art of throwing a barley-corn through the eye of a needle, gave him a bushel of barley." JOHNSON. " He must have been a king of Scotland, where barley is scarce." F. " One of the most remarkable antique figures of an animal is the boar at Florence." JOHNSON. " The first boar that is well made in marble should be preserved as a wonder. When men arrive at a facility of making boars well, then the workmanship is not of such value; but they should however be preserved as examples, and as a greater security for the restoration of the art, should it be lost."

E. " We hear prodigious complaints at

sometimes discoloured and misrepresented; and after all that Mr. Boswell and Mr. Malone have said of Mrs. Piozzi, nothing is proved—indeed nothing is asserted—(and the assertions are often disproved)—but *verbal inaccuracies*, such as saying " *old woman* " for " *old man* " and so forth. A majority of Mrs. Piozzi's anecdotes are confirmed by Mr. Boswell's own account.—ED.]

[1] The following plausible but over-prudent counsel on this subject is given by an Italian writer, quoted by " *Rhedi de generatione insectarum*," with the epithet of " *divini poetæ*."

'Sempre a quel ver ch' a faccia di menzogna
Dee l'uom chiudere le labbra quanto ei puote;
Perchè senza colpa fa vergogna."—BOSWELL.

[2] [THE CLUB.—This seems to be the only instance in which Mr. Boswell has ventured to give in any detail the conversation of that society; and we see that on this occasion he has not mentioned the *names*, but has disguised the parties under what look like *initials*. All these letters, however—even with the names of the company before us—it is not easy to appropriate. It appears by the books of the Club, as Mr. Hatchett informs the editor, that the company on that evening consisted of Dr. Johnson, president, Mr. Burke, Mr. Boswell, Dr. George Fordyce, Mr. Gibbon, Dr. Johnson (*again named*), Sir Joshua Reynolds, Lord Upper Ossory, and Mr. R. B. Sheridan. In Mr. Boswell's account, the initial E. no doubt stands for *Edmund* Burke; F., in allusion to his family name of *Fitzpatrick*, probably means Lord Upper Ossory; but the appropriation of the other letters is very difficult. The editor suspects, from some circumstances of the conversation, and from the double entry of Johnson's name, that, although it was his night to be *president*, he was not actually in the chair—perhaps from having come too late. If this suspicion be correct, the initial P. would mean *President;* but it would be still in doubt who the president was. J. probably meant Sir *Joshua* Reynolds, and R. might be *Richard* B. Sheridan; for though some of the observations made by R. are not very like Mr. Sheridan's style, it must be recollected that he was at this period a very young man, and not yet in parliament. The medical observations, and the allusions to Holland, made by C., suggest that Dr. Fordyce, a physician who was educated in Holland, was meant, although the editor cannot surmise why he should have been designated by the letter C. If these conjectures be just, it would follow that P., the *President*, was Mr Gibbon. Why Mr. Boswell did not adopt one uniform mode of designating his interlocutors, and why he has involved a simple matter in so much mystery, is unaccountable. The editor offers his explanation of the four last names merely as a conjecture, with which he himself is not entirely satisfied. Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Chalmers are equally dubious.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 180.—ED.]

present of emigration I am convinced that emigration makes a country more populous." J. "That sounds very much like a paradox." E. "Exportation of men, like exportation of all other commodities, makes more be produced." JOHNSON. "But there would be more people were there not emigration, provided there were food for more." E. "No; leave a few breeders, and you'll have more people than if there were no emigration." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, it is plain there will be more people, if there are more breeders. Thirty cows in good pasture will produce more calves than ten cows, provided they have good bulls. E. "There are bulls[1] enough in Ireland." JOHNSON. (smiling). "So, sir, I should think from your argument." BOSWELL. "You said exportation of men, like exportation of other commodities, makes more be produced. But a bounty is given to encourage the exportation of corn, and no bounty is given for the exportation of men; though, indeed, those who go gain by it." R. "But the bounty on the exportation of corn is paid at home." E. "That's the same thing." JOHNSON. "No, sir." R. "A man who stays at home gains nothing by his neighbour's emigrating." BOSWELL. "I can understand that emigration may be the cause that more people may be produced in a country; but the country will not therefore be the more populous; for the people issue from it. It can only be said that there is a flow of people. It is an encouragement to have children, to know that they can get a living by emigration." R. "Yes, if there were an emigration of children under six years of age. But they don't emigrate till they could earn their livelihood in some way at home." C. "It is remarkable that the most unhealthy countries, where there are the most destructive diseases, such as Egypt and Bengal, are the most populous." JOHNSON. "Countries which are the most populous have the most destructive diseases. *That* is the true state of the proposition." C. "Holland is very unhealthy, yet it is exceedingly populous." JOHNSON. "I know not that Holland is unhealthy. But its populousness is owing to an influx of people from all other countries. Disease cannot be the cause of populousness; for it not only carries off a great proportion of the people, but those who are left are weakened, and unfit for the purposes of increase."

R. "Mr. E. I don't mean to flatter, but when posterity reads one of your speeches in parliament, it will be difficult to believe that you took so much pains, knowing with certainty that it could produce no effect, that not one vote would be gained by it." E. "Waving your compliment to me, I shall say, in general, that it is very well worth while for a man to take pains to speak well in parliament. A man, who has vanity, speaks to display his talents; and if a man speaks well, he gradually establishes a certain reputation and consequence in the general opinion, which sooner or later will have its political reward. Besides, though not one vote is gained, a good speech has its effect. Though an act which has been ably opposed passes into a law, yet in its progress it is modelled, it is softened in such a manner, that we see plainly the minister has been told, that the members attached to him are so sensible of its injustice or absurdity from what they have heard, that it must be altered." JOHNSON. "And, sir, there is a gratification of pride. Though we cannot out-vote them, we will out-argue them. They shall not do wrong without its being shown both to themselves and to the world." E. "The house of commons is a mixed body. (I except the minority, which I hold to be pure (smiling), but I take the whole house.) It is a mass by no means pure; but neither is it wholly corrupt, though there is a large proportion of corruption in it. There are many members who generally go with the minister, who will not go all lengths. There are many honest well-meaning country gentlemen who are in parliament only to keep up the consequence of their families. Upon most of these a good speech will have influence." JOHNSON "We are all more or less governed by interest. But interest will not make us do every thing. In a case which admits of doubt, we try to think on the side which is for our interest, and generally bring ourselves to act accordingly. But the subject must admit of diversity of colouring; it must receive a colour on that side. In the house of commons there are members enough who will not vote what is grossly unjust or absurd. No, sir; there must always be right enough, or appearance of right, to keep wrong in countenance." BOSWELL. "There is surely always a majority in parliament who have places, or who want to have them, and who therefore will be generally ready to support government without requiring any pretext." E. "True, sir; that majority will always follow

'Quo clamor vocat et turba faventium.'"

BOSWELL. "Well now, let us take the common phrase, Place-hunters. I thought they had hunted without regard to anything, just as their huntsman, the minister, leads, looking only to the prey[2]." J. "But tak-

[1] [All this, as Mr. Boswell elsewhere says, must be a very imperfect record of the conversation. Mr. Burke no doubt meant to allude (perhaps with a *double meaning*) to the superabundant population of Ireland.—ED.]

[2] Lord Bolingbroke, who, however detestable as a metaphysician, must be allowed to have had

ing your metaphor, you know that in hunting there are few so desperately keen as to follow without reserve. Some do not choose to leap ditches and hedges and risk their necks, or gallop over steeps, or even to dirty themselves in bogs and mire." BOSWELL. "I am glad there are some good, quiet, moderate, political hunters." E. "I believe in any body of men in England I should have been in the minority! I have always been in the minority." P. "The house of commons resembles a private company. How seldom is any man convinced by another's argument; passion and pride rise against it." R. "What would be the consequence, if a minister, sure of a majority in the house of commons, should resolve that there should be no speaking at all upon his side?" E. "He must soon go out. That has been tried; but it was found it would not do."——

E. "The Irish language is not primitive; it is Teutonick, a mixture of the northern tongues; it has much English in it." JOHNSON. "It may have been radically Teutonick; but English and High Dutch have no similarity to the eye, though radically the same. Once, when looking into Low Dutch, I found, in a whole page, only one word similar to English; *stroem*, like *stream*, and it signified *tide*[1]." E. "I remember having seen a Dutch sonnet, in which I found this word, *roesnopies*. Nobody would at first think that this could be English; but when we inquire, we find *roes*, rose, and *nopie*, knob, so we have *rosebuds*."

JOHNSON. "I have been reading Thicknesse's Travels, which I think are entertaining." BOSWELL. "What, sir, a good book?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, to read once. I do not say you are to make a study of it, and digest it; and I believe it to be a true book in his intention. All travellers generally mean to tell truth, though Thicknesse observes, upon Smollett's account of his alarming a whole town in France by firing a blunderbuss, and frightening a French nobleman till he made him tie on his portmanteau, that he would be loth to say Smollett had told two lies in one page; but he had found the only town in France where these things could have happened. Travellers must often be mistaken. In every thing, except where men suration can be applied, they may honestly differ. There has been, of late, a strange turn in travellers to be displeased."

E. "From the experience which I have had,—and I have had a great deal,—I have learnt to think *better* of mankind." JOHNSON. "From my experience I have found them worse in commercial dealings, more disposed to cheat than I had any notion of; but more disposed to do one another good than I had conceived." J. "Less just and more beneficent." JOHNSON. "And really it is wonderful, considering how much attention is necessary for men to take care of themselves, and ward off immediate evils which press upon them, it is wonderful how much they do for others. As it is said of the greatest liar, that he tells more truth than falsehood; so it may be said of the worst man, that he does more good than evil." BOSWELL. "Perhaps from experience men may be found *happier* than we suppose." JOHNSON. "No, sir; the more we inquire we shall find men the less happy." P. "As to thinking better or worse of mankind from experience, some cunning people will not be satisfied unless they have put men to the test, as they think. There is a very good story told of Sir Godfrey Kneller, in his character of a justice of the peace. A gentleman brought his servant before him, upon an accusation of having stolen some money from him; but it having come out that he had laid it purposely in the servant's way, in order to try his honesty, Sir Godfrey sent the master to prison[2]." JOHNSON. "To resist temptation once is not a sufficient proof of honesty. If a servant, indeed, were to resist the continued temptation of silver lying in a window, as some people let it lie, when he is sure his master does not know how much there is of it, he would give a strong proof of honesty. But this is a proof to which you have no right to put a man. You know, humanly speaking, there is a certain degree of temptation which will overcome any virtue. Now, in so far as you ap

admirable talents as a political writer, thus describes the house of commons in his "Letter to Sir William Wyndham;"—"You know the nature of that assembly: they grow, like hounds, fond of the man who shows them game, and by whose halloo they are used to be encouraged."—BOSWELL.

[1] [Dr. Johnson seems to have been in error in this point. *Stroem* signifies just what *stream* does in English—*current*, flowing water, and thence *tide:* and the languages have undoubtedly a great similarity. Let us take as examples the explanations given in Marin's Dutch Dictionary, of the very two words to which Johnson alluded, with the English subjoined:

CURRENT.—*Stroom—ras*
stream—race.
TIDE.—*Water—ty—stroom—ebbe en vloet vander see*
water—tide—stream—ebb and flow of the sea.

And under the word *current* is quoted a Dutch phrase which is almost English;

Dat bock word tien cronen
that book worth ten crowns.—ED.]

[2] Pope thus introduces this story:

"Faith, in such case if you should prosecute,
I think Sir Godfrey should decide the suit,
Who sent the thief, who stole the cash, away,
And punish'd him that put it in his way."
Imitations of Horace, Book II. Epist. ii.—BOSWELL.

proach temptation to a man, you do him an injury; and, if he is overcome, you share his guilt." P. "And, when once overcome, it is easier for him to be got the better of again." BOSWELL. "Yes, you are his seducer; you have debauched him. I have known a man resolved to put friendship to the test, by asking a friend to lend him money, merely with that view, when he did not want it." JOHNSON. "That is very wrong, sir. Your friend may be a narrow man, and yet have many good qualities: narrowness may be his only fault. Now you are trying his general character as a friend by one particular singly, in which he happens to be defective, when, in truth, his character is composed of many particulars."

E. "I understand the hogshead of claret, which this society was favoured with by our friend the dean [1], is nearly out; I think he should be written to, to send another of the same kind. Let the request be made with a happy ambiguity of expression, so that we may have the chance of his sending it also as a present." JOHNSON. "I am willing to offer my services as secretary on this occasion." P. "As many as are for Dr. Johnson being secretary, hold up your hands [2].—Carried unanimously." BOSWELL. "He will be our dictator." JOHNSON. "No, the company is to dictate to me. I am only to write for wine; and I am quite disinterested, as I drink none; I shall not be suspected of having forged the application. I am no more than humble *scribe*." E. "Then you shall *pre*scribe." BOSWELL. "Very well. The first play of words today." J. "No, no; the *bulls* in Ireland." JOHNSON. "Were I your dictator, you should have no wine. It would be my business *cavere ne quid detrimenti Respublica caperet*, and wine is dangerous. Rome was ruined by luxury." (smiling). E. "If you allow no wine as dictator, you shall not have me for your master of horse."

On Saturday, April 4, I drank tea with Johnson at Dr. Taylor's, where he had dined. He entertained us with an account of a tragedy written by a Dr. Kennedy (not the Lisbon physician). * * * * * * * [3]

He was very silent this evening, and read in a variety of books; suddenly throwing down one, and taking up another.

He talked of going to Streatham that night. TAYLOR. "You'll be robbed, if you do; or you must shoot a highwayman. Now I would rather be robbed than do that; I would not shoot a highwayman." JOHNSON. "But I would rather shoot him in the instant when he is attempting to rob me, than afterwards swear against him at the Old Bailey, to take away his life, after he has robbed me. I am surer I am right in the one case, than in the other. I may be mistaken as to the man when I swear; I cannot be mistaken, if I shoot him in the act. Besides, we feel less reluctance to take away a man's life, when we are heated by the injury, than to do it at a distance of time by an oath, after we have cooled." BOSWELL. "So, sir, you would rather act from the motive of private passion, than that of publick advantage." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, when I shoot the highwayman, I act from both." BOSWELL. "Very well, very well. There is no catching him." JOHNSON. "At the same time, one does not know what to say. For perhaps one may, a year after, hang himself from uneasiness for having shot a highwayman [4]. Few minds are fit to be trusted with so great a thing." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, you would not shoot him?" JOHNSON. "But I might be vexed afterwards for that too."

Thrale's carriage not having come for him, as he expected, I accompanied him some part of the way home to his own house. I told him, that I had talked of him [5] to Mr. Dunning a few days before, and had said, that in his company we did not so much interchange conversation, as listen to him; and that Dunning observed, upon this, "One is always willing to listen to Dr. Johnson;" to which I answered, "That is a great deal from you, sir." "Yes, sir," said Johnson, "a great deal indeed. Here is a man willing to listen, to whom the world is listening all the rest of the year." BOSWELL. "I think, sir, it is right to tell one man of such a handsome thing, which has been said of him by another. It tends to

[1] [Dr. Barnard, Dean of Derry, afterwards Bishop of Killaloe and Limerick.—ED.]

[2] ['This supports the conjecture that Dr. Johnson was not the President.—ED.]

[3] [Here a few lines, relating to the disgusting and indelicate subject of this tragedy, are omitted.—ED.]

[4] The late Duke of Montrose was generally said to have been uneasy on that account; but can contradict the report from his grace's own authority. As he used to admit me to very easy conversation with him, I took the liberty to introduce the subject. His grace told me, that when riding one night near London, he was attacked by two highwaymen on horseback, and that he instantly shot one of them, upon which the other galloped off; that his servant, who was very well mounted, proposed to pursue him and take him, but that his grace said, "No, we have had blood enough; I hope the man may live to repent." His grace, upon my presuming to put the question, assured me, that his mind was not at all clouded by what he had thus done in self-defence.—BOSWELL. [This is another striking instance of Mr. Boswell's readiness to ask questions. His curiosity has benefited us; but few could have the boldness to have made such inquiries.—ED.]

[5] [Yet Mr. Boswell sometimes censures Mrs. Thrale for flattery!—ED.]

ncrease benevolence." JOHNSON. "Undoubtedly it is right, sir."

On Tuesday, April 7, I breakfasted with him at his house. He said, "Nobody was content." I mentioned to him a respectable person[1] in Scotland whom he knew; and I asserted, that I really believed he was always content. JOHNSON. "No, sir, he is not content with the present; he has always some new scheme, some new plantation, something which is future. You know he was not content as a widower, for he married again." BOSWELL. "But he is not restless." JOHNSON. "Sir, he is only locally at rest. A chymist is locally at rest; but his mind is hard at work. This gentleman has done with external exertions. It is too late for him to engage in distant projects." BOSWELL. "He seems to amuse himself quite well; to have his attention fixed, and his tranquillity preserved by very small matters. I have tried this; but it would not do with me." JOHNSON (laughing). "No, sir; it must be born with a man to be contented to take up with little things. Women have a great advantage that they may take up with little things without disgracing themselves: a man cannot, except with fiddling. Had I learnt to fiddle, I should have done nothing else." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, did you ever play on any musical instrument?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. I once bought me a flagelet; but I never made out a tune." BOSWELL. "A flagelet, sir!—so small an instrument[2]? I should have liked to hear you play on the violoncello. *That* should have been *your* instrument." JOHNSON. "Sir, I might as well have played on the violoncello as another; but I should have done nothing else. No, sir; a man would never undertake great things, could he be amused with small. I once tried knotting. Dempster's[3] sister undertook to teach me; but I could not learn it." BOSWELL. "So, sir; it will be related in pompous narrative, 'Once for his amusement he tried knotting; nor did this Hercules disdain the distaff.'" JOHNSON. "Knitting of stockings is a good amusement. As a freeman of Aberdeen, I should be a knitter of stockings." He asked me to go down with him and dine at Mr. Thrale's at Streatham, to which I agreed. I had lent him "An Account of Scotland, in 1702," written by a man of various inquiry, an English chaplain to a regiment stationed there. JOHNSON. "It is sad stuff, sir, miserably written, as books in general then were. There is now an elegance of style universally diffused. No man now writes so ill as 'Martin's Account of the Hebrides' is written. A man could not write so ill, if he should try. Set a merchant's clerk now to write, and he 'll do better."

He talked to me with serious concern of a certain female friend's[4] "laxity of narration, and inattention to truth." "I am as much vexed," said he, "at the ease with which she hears it mentioned to her, as at the thing itself. I told her, 'Madam, you are contented to hear every day said to you, what the highest of mankind have died for, rather than bear.' You know, sir, the highest of mankind have died rather than bear to be told they had uttered a falsehood. Do talk to her of it: I am weary."

BOSWELL. "Was not Dr. John Campbell a very inaccurate man in his narrative, sir? He once told me, that he drank thirteen bottles of port at a sitting[5]." JOHN-

[1] [Lord Auchinleck, Mr. Boswell's father.—ED.]

[2] When I told this to Miss Seward, she smiled, and repeated with admirable readiness, from "Acis and Galatea,"

"Bring me a hundred reeds of ample growth,
To make a pipe for my *capacious mouth*.—BOSWELL.

[3] [This is probably a mistake. Johnson does not appear to have had any acquaintance with Mr. Dempster's family. His early friend, Mr. *Dyer*, had a sister, with whom there is reason to suppose that Johnson was on terms of intimacy; and Mr. Boswell, in copying his notes (in which perhaps the name was abbreviated), may have mistaken Dyer for Dempster.—ED.]

[4] [Mrs. Thrale. Dr. Johnson is here made to say, that he was "*weary* of chiding her on this subject." It is, however, remarkable that in all his letters to her—written certainly with equal freedom and affection—there should be no allusion of this kind. Without accusing Mr. Boswell of stating what was not true, we may suspect that on these occasions he did not tell the *whole* truth; and that Dr. Johnson's expressions were *answers* to *suggestions* of his own; and to enable us to judge fairly of the answer, the suggestion itself should have been stated. This seems the more probable from Johnson's saying, "*Do talk to her of it;*" which would have been a violation of all decency and friendship (considering the relative situations of Mrs. Thrale, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Boswell), if it did not allude to some particular fact of which Boswell himself had complained.—ED.]

[5] Lord Macartney observes upon this passage, "I have heard him tell many things, which, though embellished by their mode of narrative, had their foundation in truth; but I never remember any thing approaching to this. If he had written it, I should have supposed some wag had put the figure of one before the three." I am, however, absolutely certain that Dr. Campbell told me it, and I gave particular attention to it, being myself a lover of wine, and therefore curious to hear whatever is remarkable concerning drinking. There can be no doubt that some men can drink, without suffering any injury, such a quantity as to others appears incredible. It is but fair to add, that Dr. Campbell told me, he took a very long time to this great potation; and I have heard Dr. Johnson say, "Sir, if a man drinks very

son "Why, sir, I do not know that Campbell ever lied with pen and ink; but you could not entirely depend on any thing he told you in conversation, if there was fact mixed with it. However, I loved Campbell: he was a solid orthodox man: he had a reverence for religion. Though defective in practice, he was religious in principle; and he did nothing grossly wrong that I have heard [1]."

I told him that I had been present the day before, when Mrs. Montagu, the literary lady, sat to Miss Reynolds for her picture; and that she said, "she had bound up Mr. Gibbon's History without the last two offensive chapters; for that she thought the book so far good, as it gave, in an elegant manner, the substance of the bad writers *medii ævi*, which the late Lord Lyttelton advised her to read." Johnson. "Sir, she has not read them: she shows none of this impetuosity to me: she does not know Greek, and, I fancy, knows little Latin. She is willing you should think she knows them; but she does not say she does [2]." Boswell. "Mr. Harris, who was present, agreed with her." Johnson. "Harris was laughing at her, sir. Harris is a sound sullen scholar; he does not like interlopers. Harris, however, is a prig, and a bad prig [3]. I looked into his book, and thought he did not understand his own system." Boswell. "He says plain things in a formal and abstract way, to be sure; but his method is good: for to have clear notions upon any subject, we must have recourse to analytick arrangement." Johnson. "Sir, it is what every body does, whether they will or no. But sometimes things may be made darker by definition. I see a *cow*. I define her, *Animal quadrupes ruminans cornutum*. But a goat ruminates, and a cow may have no horns. *Cow* is plainer." Boswell. "I think Dr. Franklin's definition of *Man*, a good one—'A tool-making animal.'" Johnson. "But many a man never made a tool: and suppose a man without arms, he could not make a tool."

Talking of drinking wine, he said, "I did not leave off wine, because I could not bear it; I have drunk three bottles of port without being the worse for it. University College has witnessed this." Boswell. "Why then, sir, did you leave it off?" Johnson. "Why, sir, because it is so much better for a man to be sure that he is never to be intoxicated, never to lose the power over himself. I shall not begin to drink wine again till I grow old [4], and want it." Boswell. "I think, sir, you once said to me, that not to drink wine was a great deduction from life." Johnson. "It is a diminution of pleasure, to be sure; but I do not say a diminution of happiness. There is more happiness in being rational." Boswell. "But if we could have pleasure always, should not we be happy? The greatest part of men would compound for pleasure." Johnson. "Supposing we could have pleasure always, an intellectual man would not compound for it. The greatest part of men would compound, because the greatest part of men are gross." Boswell. "I allow there may be greater pleasure than from wine. I have had more pleasure from your conversation. I have indeed; I assure you I have." Johnson. "When we talk of pleasure, we mean sensual pleasure. * *[5] Philosophers tell you, that pleasure is *contrary* to happiness. Gross men prefer animal pleasure. So there are men who have preferred living among savages. Now what a wretch must he be, who is content with such conversation as can be had among savages! You may remember an officer at Fort Augustus, who had served in America, told us of a woman whom they were obliged to *bind*, in order to get her back from savage life." Boswell. "She must have been an animal, a beast." Johnson. "Sir, she was a speaking cat."

I mentioned to him that I had become

slowly, and lets one glass evaporate before he takes another, I know not how long he may drink." Dr. Campbell mentioned a colonel of militia who sat with him all the time, and drank equally.—Boswell.

[1] Dr. John Campbell died about two years before this conversation took place; Dec. 10, 1776. —Malone. [See *ante*, v. i. p. 270. 306.—Ed.]

[2] [All this must be truncated and distorted. Mrs. Montagu did *not* say that she had *read* these authours, but had been advised to read them; and the inference from what she did say might be, that she had read Gibbon *instead:* and surely the word "*impetuosity*" must be a mistake, arising, perhaps, from Mr. Boswell's not being able to decipher his own manuscript. Then, again, Mr. Harris is said to *agree with her*—in what?—in thinking that Gibbon's History gave, in an elegant manner, the substance of the writers of the *medii ævi*. How could this be laughing at her? Mr. Boswell says elsewhere of himself, *brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*.—Ed.]

[3] What my friend meant by these words concerning the amiable philosopher of Salisbury, I am at a loss to understand. A friend suggests, that Johnson thought his *manner* as a writer affected, while at the same time the *matter* did not compensate for that fault. In short, that he meant to make a remark quite different from that which a *celebrated gentleman* made on a very eminent physician: He is a coxcomb, but a *satisfactory coxcomb* —Boswell. The *celebrated gentleman* here alluded to was the late Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton.—Malone.

[4] [He was now *in his seventieth year*.—Ed.]

[5] [Two lines are here omitted.—Ed.]

very weary in company where I heard not a single intellectual sentence, except that a man who had been settled ten years in Minorca was become a much inferiour man to what he was in London, because a man's mind grows narrow in a narrow place." JOHNSON. "A man's mind grows narrow in a narrow place, whose mind is enlarged only because he has lived in a large place: but what is got by books and thinking is preserved in a narrow place as well as in a large place. A man cannot know modes of life as well in Minorca as in London; but he may study mathematicks as well in Minorca." BOSWELL. "I don't know, sir: if you had remained ten years in the isle of Col, you would not have been the man that you now are." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, if I had been there from fifteen to twenty-five; but not if from twenty-five to thirty-five." BOSWELL. "I own, sir, the spirits which I have in London make me do every thing with more readiness and vigour. I can talk twice as much in London as any where else."

Of Goldsmith, he said, "He was not an agreeable companion, for he talked always for fame[1]. A man who does so never can be pleasing. The man who talks to unburden his mind is the man to delight you. An eminent friend of ours[2] is not so agreeable as the variety of his knowledge would otherwise make him, because he talks partly from ostentation."

Soon after our arrival at Thrale's, I heard one of the maids calling eagerly on another to go to Dr. Johnson. I wondered what this could mean. I afterwards learnt, that it was to give her a Bible, which he had brought from London as a present to her.

He was for a considerable time occupied in reading "Memoires de Fontenelle," leaning and swinging upon the low gate into the court, without his hat.

I looked into Lord Kaimes's "Sketches of the History of Man;" and mentioned to Dr. Johnson his censure of Charles the Fifth, for celebrating his funeral obsequies in his life-time, which, I told him, I had been used to think a solemn and affecting act. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a man may dispose his mind to think so of that act of Charles; but it is so liable to ridicule, that if one man out of ten thousand laughs at it, he 'll make the other nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine laugh too." I could not agree with him in this.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 209. [Johnson thought very well of Lord Kaimes's Elements of Criticism; of others of his writings he thought very indifferently, and laughed much at his opinion that war was a good thing occasionally, as so much valour and virtue were exhibited in it. "A fire," says Johnson, "might as well be thought a good thing; there is the bravery and address of the firemen in extinguishing it; there is much humanity exerted in saving the lives and properties of the poor sufferers; yet," says he, "after all this, who can say a fire is a good thing?"]

Sir John Pringle had expressed a wish that I would ask Dr. Johnson's opinion what were the best English sermons for style. I took an opportunity to-day of mentioning several to him. "Atterbury?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, one of the best." BOSWELL. "Tillotson?" JOHNSON. "Why, not now. I should not advise a preacher at this day to imitate Tillotson's style; though I do n't know; I should be cautious of objecting to what has been applauded by so many suffrages.—South is one of the best, if you except his peculiarities, and his violence, and sometimes coarseness of language.—Seed has a very fine style; but he is not very theological.—Jortin's sermons are very elegant.—Sherlock's style, too, is very elegant, though he has not made it his principal study.—And you may add Smalridge. All the latter preachers have a good style. Indeed, nobody now talks much of style: every body composes pretty well. There are no such inharmonious periods as there were a hundred years ago. I should recommend Dr. Clarke's sermons, were he orthodox. However, it is very well known *where* he is not orthodox, which was upon the doctrine of the Trinity, as to which he is a condemned heretick; so one is aware of it." BOSWELL. "I like Ogden's Sermons on Prayer very much, both for neatness of style and subtilty of reasoning." JOHNSON. "I should like to read all that Ogden has written." BOSWELL. "What I wish to know is, what sermons afford the best specimen of English pulpit eloquence." JOHNSON. "We have no sermons addressed to the passions, that are good for any thing; if you mean that kind of eloquence." A CLERGYMAN (whose name I do not recollect). "Were not Dodd's sermons addressed to the passions?" JOHNSON. "They were nothing, sir, be they address ed to what they may."

At dinner, Mrs. Thrale expressed a wish to go and see Scotland. JOHNSON. "Seeing Scotland, madam, is only seeing a worse England. It is seeing the flower gradually fade away to the naked stalk. Seeing the Hebrides, indeed, is seeing quite a different scene."

Our poor friend, Mr. Thomas Davies, was soon to have a benefit at Drury-lane Theatre, as some relief to his unfortunate circumstances. We were all warmly in

[1] [See *ante*, vol i. p. 296. 300. 418, and vol. ii. p. 62.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Burke.—ED.]

terested for his success, and had contributed to it. However, we thought there was no harm in having our joke, when he could not be hurt by it. I proposed that he should be brought on to speak a prologue upon the occasion; and I began to mutter fragments of what it might be: as, that when now grown *old*, he was obliged to cry "Poor Tom's *a-cold;*"—that he owned he had been driven from the stage by a Churchill, but that this was no disgrace, for a Churchill had beat the French;—that he had been satirized as "mouthing a sentence as curs mouth a bone," but he was now glad of a bone to pick. "Nay," said Johnson, "I would have him to say,

'Mad Tom is come to see the world again.'"

He and I returned to town in the evening. Upon the road, I endeavoured to maintain in argument, that a landed gentleman is not under any obligation to reside upon his estate; and that by living in London he does no injury to his country. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he does no injury to his country in general, because the money which he draws from it gets back again in circulation; but to his particular district, his particular parish, he does an injury. All that he has to give away is not given to those who have the first claim to it. And though I have said that the money circulates back, it is a long time before that happens. Then, sir, a man of family and estate ought to consider himself as having the charge of a district, over which he is to diffuse civility and happiness[1]."

Next day I found him at home in the morning. He praised Delany's "Observations on Swift;" said that his book and Lord Orrery's might both be true, though one viewed Swift more, and the other less favourably; and that, between both, we might have a complete notion of Swift.

Talking of a man's resolving to deny himself the use of wine, from moral and religious considerations, he said, "He must not doubt about it. When one doubts as to pleasure, we know what will be the conclusion. I now no more think of drinking wine, than a horse does. The wine upon the table is no more for me, than for the dog who is under the table."

On Thursday, April 9, I dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with the Bishop of St. Asaph (Dr. Shipley), Mr. Allan Ramsay[2], Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Cambridge, and Mr. Langton. Mr. Ramsay had lately returned from Italy, and entertained us with his observations upon Horace's villa, which he had examined with great care. I relished this much, as it brought fresh into my mind what I had viewed with great pleasure thirteen years before. The bishop, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Cambridge, joined with Mr. Ramsay, in recollecting the various lines in Horace relating to the subject.

Horace's journey to Brundusium being mentioned, Johnson observed that the brook which he describes is to be seen now, exactly as at that time; and that he had often wondered how it happened, that small brooks, such as this, kept the same situation for ages, notwithstanding earthquakes, by which even mountains have been changed, and agriculture, which produces such a variation upon the surface of the earth. CAMBRIDGE. "A Spanish writer has this thought in a poetical conceit. After observing that most of the solid structures of Rome are totally perished, while the Tiber remains the same, he adds,

'Lo que èra firme huió, solamente
Lo Fugitivo permanece y dura.'"

JOHNSON. "Sir, that is taken from Janus Vitalis:

'——————————— immota labescunt;
Et quæ perpetuò sunt agitata manent.'"

The bishop said, it appeared from Horace's writings that he was a cheerful contented man. JOHNSON. "We have no reason to believe that, my lord. Are we to think Pope was happy, because he says so in his writings? We see in his writings what he wished the state of his mind to appear. Dr. Young, who pined for preferment, talks with contempt of it in his writings, and affects to despise every thing that he did not despise." BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH. "He was like other chaplains, looking for vacancies: but that is not peculiar to the clergy. I remember, when I was with the army, after the battle of Lasfeldt, the officers seriously grumbled that no general was killed." CAMBRIDGE. "We may believe Horace more, when he says,

'Romæ Tibur amem ventosus, Tibure Romam;'
1 Ep. viii. 12.

than when he boasts of his consistency:

'Me constare mihi scis, et discedere tristem,
Quandocunque trahunt invisa negotia Romam.'"
1 Ep. xiv. 16

BOSWELL. "How hard is it that man can never be at rest!" RAMSAY. "It is not in his nature to be at rest. When he is at rest, he is in the worst state that he can be in; for he has nothing to agitate him. He is then like the man in the Irish song[3],

[1] See, however, *ante*, p. 123, where his decision on this subject is more favourable to the absentee. —MALONE.

[2] [An eminent painter; son of the Scottish poet; born in 1709; died, in 1784, at Dover, on his return from his fourth visit to Italy.—ED.]

[3] [Called "Alley Croker." This lady, a cele-

'There lived a young man in Ballinacrazy,
Who wanted a wife for to make him unaisy.'"

Goldsmith being mentioned, Johnson observed, that it was long before his merit came to be acknowledged: that he once complained to him, in ludicrous terms of distress, "Whenever I write any thing, the publick *make a point* to know nothing about it:" but that his "Traveller[1]" brought him into high reputation. LANGTON. "There is not one bad line in that poem; not one of Dryden's careless verses." SIR JOSHUA. "I was glad to hear Charles Fox say, it was one of the finest poems in the English language." LANGTON. "Why were you glad? You surely had no doubt of this before." JOHNSON. "No; the merit of 'The Traveller' is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it." SIR JOSHUA. "But his friends may suspect they had too great a partiality for him." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, the partiality of his friends was always against him. It was with difficulty we could give him a hearing. Goldsmith had no settled notions upon any subject; so he talked always at random. It seemed to be his intention to blurt out whatever was in his mind, and see what would become of it. He was angry, too, when catched in an absurdity; but it did not prevent him from falling into another the next minute. I remember Chamier, after talking with him some time, said, 'Well, I do believe he wrote this poem himself'; and, let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Chamier once asked him, what he meant by *slow*, the last word in the first line of 'The Traveller,'

'Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.'

Did he mean tardiness of locomotion? Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered, 'Yes.' I was sitting by, and said, 'No, sir, you do not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.' Chamier believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had seen me write it[2]. Goldsmith, however, was a man, who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any other man could do. He deserved a place in Westminster Abbey; and every year he lived would have deserved it better. He had, indeed, been at no pains to fill his mind with knowledge. He transplanted it from one place to another, and it did not settle in his mind; so he could not tell what was in his own books."[3]

We talked of living in the country. JOHNSON. "No wise man will go to live in the country, unless he has something to do which can be better done in the country. For instance; if he is to shut himself up for a year to study a science, it is better to look out to the fields than to an opposite wall[3]. Then if a man walks out in the the country, there is nobody to keep him from walking in again; but if a man walks out in London, he is not sure when he shall walk in again. A great city is, to be sure, the school for studying life; and 'The proper study of mankind is man,' as Pope observes." BOSWELL. "I fancy London is the best place for society; though I have heard that the very first society of Paris is still beyond any thing that we have here." JOHNSON. "Sir, I question if in Paris such a company as is sitting round this table could be got together in less than half a year. They talk in France of the felicity of men and women living together: the truth is, that there the men are not higher than the women, they know no more than the women do, and they are not held down in their conversation by the presence of women." RAMSAY. "Literature is upon the growth, it is in its spring in France: here it is rather *passée*." JOHNSON. "Literature was in France long before we had it. Paris was the second city for the revival of letters: Italy had it first, to be sure. What have we done for literature, equal to what was done by the Stephani and others in France? Our literature came to us through France. Caxton printed only two books, Chaucer and Gower, that were not translations from the French; and Chaucer, we know, took much from the Italians. No, sir, if literature be in its

brated beauty in her day, was the youngest daughter of Colonel Croker, of Ballinagard, in the county of Limerick. The lover whose rejection has immortalised her name is not known; but she married Charles Langley, Esq., of Lisnarnock. She died without issue, about the middle of the last century.—ED.]

[1] First published in 1765.—MALONE.

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 226, as to the lines of this poem which Johnson wrote.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Cumberland was of a contrary opinion. "In the ensuing year I again paid a visit to my father at Clonfert; and there, in a little closet, at the back of the *palace*, as it was called, unfurnished, and out of use, with no other prospect from its single window but that of a turf-stack, with which it was almost in contact, I seated myself by choice, and began to plan and compose *The West Indian*. In all my hours of study, it has been through life my object so to locate myself as to have little or nothing to distract my attention, and, therefore, brilliant rooms or pleasant prospects I have ever avoided. A dead wall, or, as in the present case, an Irish turf-stack, are not attractions that can call off the fancy from its pursuits; and whilst in those pursuits it can find interest and occupation, it wants no outward aids to cheer it."—*Mem.* vol. i. p. 271. 277.—ED.]

spring in France, it is a second spring; it is after a winter. We are now before the French in literature: but we had it long after them. In England, any man who wears a sword and a powdered wig is ashamed to be illiterate. I believe it is not so in France. Yet there is, probably, a great deal of learning in France, because they have such a number of religious establishments; so many men who have nothing else to do but to study. I do not know this; but I take it upon the common principles of chance. Where there are many shooters, some will hit."

We talked of old age. Johnson (now in his seventieth year) said, "It is a man's own fault, it is from want of use, if his mind grows torpid in old age [1]." The bishop asked, if an old man does not lose faster than he gets. JOHNSON. "I think not, my lord, if he exerts himself." One of the company rashly observed, that he thought it was happy for an old man that insensibility comes upon him. JOHNSON (with a noble elevation and disdain). "No, sir, I should never be happy by being less rational." BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH. "Your wish then, sir, is γηρασκειν διδασκομενος." JOHNSON. "Yes, my lord." His lordship mentioned a charitable establishment in Wales, where people were maintained, and supplied with every thing, upon the condition of their contributing the weekly produce of their labour; and, he said, they grew quite torpid for want of property. JOHNSON. "They have no object for hope. Their condition cannot be better. It is rowing without a port."

One of the company asked him the meaning of the expression in Juvenal, *unius lacertæ*. JOHNSON. "I think it clear enough; as much ground as one may have a chance to find a lizard upon."

Commentators have differed as to the exact meaning of the expression by which the poet intended to enforce the sentiment contained in the passage where these words occur. It is enough that they mean to denote even a very small possession, provided it be a man's own:

"Est aliquid, quocunque loco, quocunque recessu,
Unius sese dominum fecisse lacertæ."
3 Sat. 231.

This season there was a whimsical fashion in the newspapers of applying Shakspeare's words to describe living persons well known in the world; which was done under the title of "Modern Characters from Shakspeare;" many of which were admirably adapted. The fancy took so much, that they were afterwards collected into a pamphlet. Somebody said to Johnson, across the table, that he had not been in those characters. "Yes," said he, "I have. I should have been sorry to have been left out." He then repeated what had been applied to him:

"You must borrow me Garagantua's mouth."

Miss Reynolds not perceiving at once the meaning of this, he was obliged to explain it to her, which had something of an awkward and ludicrous effect. "Why, madam, it has a reference to me, as using big words, which require the mouth of a giant to pronounce them. Garagantua is the name of a giant in Rabelais." BOSWELL. "But, sir, there is another amongst them for you:

'He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for his power to thunder.'"

JOHNSON. "There is nothing marked in that. No. Sir, Garagantua is the best." Notwithstanding this ease and good humour, when I, a little while afterwards, repeated his sarcasm on Kenrick [2] which was received with applause, he asked "*Who* said that?" and on my suddenly answering,—*Garagantua*, he looked serious, which was

[1] Hobbes was of the same opinion with Johnson on this subject; and, in his answer to D'Avenant's Preface to Gondibert, with great spirit, explodes the current opinion, that the mind in old age is subject to a necessary and irresistible debility. "And now, while I think on 't," says the philosopher, "give me leave, with a short discord, to sweeten the harmony of the approaching close. I have nothing to object to your poem, but dissent only from something in your preface, sounding to the prejudice of age. It is commonly said, that old age is a return to childhood: which methinks you insist on so long, as if you desired it should be believed. That 's the note I mean to shake a little. That saying, meant only of the weakness of body, was wrested to the weakness of mind, by froward children, weary of the controlment of their parents, masters, and other admonitors. Secondly, the dotage and childishness they ascribe to age is never the effect of time, but sometimes of the excesses of youth, and not a returning to, but a continual stay with childhood. For they that want the curiosity of furnishing their memories with the rarities of nature in their youth, and pass their time in making provision only for their ease and sensual delight, are children still, at what years soever; as they that coming into a populous city, never going out of their inn, are strangers still, how long soever they have been there. Thirdly, there is no reason for any man to think himself wiser to-day than yesterday, which does not equally convince he shall be wiser to-morrow than to-day. Fourthly, you will be forced to change your opinion hereafter, when you are old; and, in the mean time, you discredit all I have said before in your commendation, because I am old already.—But no more of this." Hobbes, when he wrote these pleasing and sensible remarks, was sixty-two years old, and D'Avenant forty-five.—MALONE.

[2] See vol. i. p. 223.—BOSWELL.

a sufficient indication that he did not wish it to be kept up. [Previous however to this some newspaper had described Johnson and Goldsmith as the pedant and his flatterer in Love's Labour Lost. Goldsmith came to his friend, fretting and foaming, and vowing vengeance against the printer, &c. till Dr. Johnson, tired of the bustle, and desirous to think of something else, cried out at last, "Why, what wouldest thou have, dear doctor? who the plague is hurt with all this nonsense? and how is a man the worse I wonder in his health, purse, or character, for being called *Holofernes?*" "I do not know," replies the other, "how you may relish being called Holofernes, but I do not like at least to play *Goodman Dull.*"

Piozzi, p. 139

When we went to the drawing-room there was a rich assemblage. Besides the company who had been at dinner, there were Mr. Garrick, Mr. Harris of Salisbury, Dr. Percy, Dr. Burney, the Honorable Mrs. Cholmondeley, Miss Hannah More, &c. &c.

After wandering about in a kind of pleasing distraction for some time, I got into a corner, with Johnson, Garrick, and Harris. GARRICK (to Harris). "Pray, sir, have you read Potter's Æschylus?" HARRIS. "Yes; and think it pretty." GARRICK (to Johnson). "And what think you, sir, of it?" JOHNSON. "I thought what I read of it *verbiage:* but upon Mr. Harris's recommendation, I will read a play. (To Mr. Harris.) Don't prescribe two." Mr. Harris suggested one, I do not remember which. JOHNSON. "We must try its effect as an English poem; that is the way to judge of the merit of a translation. Translations are, in general, for people who cannot read the original." I mentioned the vulgar saying, that Pope's Homer was not a good representation of the original. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is the greatest work of the kind that has ever been produced." BOSWELL. "The truth is, it is impossible perfectly to translate poetry. In a different language it may be the same tune, but it has not the same tone. Homer plays it on a bassoon; Pope on a flagelet." HARRIS. "I think, heroick poetry is best in blank verse; yet it appears that rhyme is essential to English poetry, from our deficiency in metrical quantities. In my opinion, the chief excellence of our language is numerous prose." JOHNSON. "Sir, William Temple was the first writer who gave cadence to English prose [1]. Before his time they were careless of arrangement, and did not mind whether a sentence ended with an important word or an insignificant word, or with what part of speech it was concluded." Mr. Langton, who now had joined us, commended Clarendon. JOHNSON. "He is objected to for his parentheses, his involved clauses, and his want of harmony. But he is supported by his matter. It is, indeed, owing to a plethory of matter that his style is so faulty: every *substance* (smiling to Mr. Harris) has so many *accidents.*—To be distinct, we must talk *analytically.* If we analyse language, we must speak of it grammatically; if we analyse argument, we must speak of it logically." GARRICK "Of all the translations that ever were attempted, I think Elphinston's Martial the most extraordinary [2]. He consulted me upon it, who am a little of an epigrammatist myself, you know. I told him freely, 'You don't seem to have that turn.' I asked him if he was serious; and finding he was, I advised him against publishing. Why, his translation is more difficult to understand than the original. I thought him a man of some talents; but he seems crazy in this." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have done what I had not courage to do. But he did not ask my advice, and I did not force it upon him, to make him angry with me." GARRICK. "But as a friend, sir—" JOHNSON. "Why, such a friend as I am with him—no." GARRICK. "But if you see a friend going to tumble over a precipice?" JOHNSON. "That is an extravagant case,

[1] The authour, in vol. i. p. 89, 90, says, that Johnson once told him, "that he had formed his style upon that of Sir William Temple, and upon Chambers's Proposal for his Dictionary. He certainly was mistaken; or, if he imagined at first that he was imitating Temple, he was very unsuccessful, for nothing can be more unlike than the simplicity of Temple and the richness of Johnson." This observation of our authour, on the first view, seems perfectly just; but, on a closer examination, it will, I think, appear to have been founded on a misapprehension. Mr. Boswell understood Johnson too literally. He did not, I conceive, mean, that he endeavoured to imitate Temple's style in all its parts; but that he formed his style on him and Chambers (perhaps the paper published in 1737, relative to his second edition, entitled "Considerations," &c.), taking from each what was most worthy of imitation. The passage before us, I think, shows that he learned from Temple to modulate his periods, and, *in that respect only*, made him his pattern. In this view of the subject there is no difficulty. He might learn from Chambers, compactness, strength, and precision (in opposition to the laxity of style which had long prevailed); from Sir Thomas Browne (who was certainly one of his archetypes), *pondera verborum*, vigour and energy of expression; and from Temple, harmonious arrangement, the due collocation of words, and the other arts and graces of composition here enumerated: and yet, after all, his style might bear no striking resemblance to that of any of these writers, though it had profited by each.—MALONE.

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 85.—ED.]

sir. You are sure a friend will thank you for hindering him from tumbling over a precipice: but, in the other case, I should hurt his vanity, and do him no good. He would not take my advice. His brother-in-law, Strahan, sent him a subscription of fifty pounds, and said he would send him fifty more, if he would not publish." GARRICK. "What! eh! is Strahan a good judge of an epigram? Is not he rather an *obtuse* man, eh?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he may not be a judge of an epigram: but you see he is a judge of what is *not* an epigram." BOSWELL. "It is easy for you, Mr. Garrick, to talk to an authour as you talked to Elphinston; you, who have been so long the manager of a theatre, rejecting the plays of poor authours. You are an old judge, who have often pronounced sentence of death. You are a practised surgeon, who have often amputated limbs; and though this may have been for the good of your patients, they cannot like you. Those who have undergone a dreadful operation are not very fond of seeing the operator again." GARRICK. "Yes, I know enough of that. There was a reverend gentleman (Mr. Hawkins), who wrote a tragedy, the SIEGE of something [1], which I refused." HARRIS. "So, the siege was raised." JOHNSON. "Ay, he came to me and complained; and told me, that Garrick said his play was wrong in the *concoction*. Now, what is the concoction of a play?" (Here Garrick started, and twisted himself, and seemed sorely vexed; for Johnson told me, he believed the story was true). GARRICK. "I—I—I—said, *first* concoction [2]." JOHNSON (smiling). "Well, he left out *first*. And Rich, he said, refused him *in false English*: he could show it under his hand." GARRICK. "He wrote to me in violent wrath, for having refused his play: 'Sir, this is growing a very serious and terrible affair. I am resolved to publish my play. I will appeal to the world; and how will your judgment appear?' I answered, 'Sir, notwithstanding all the seriousness, and all the terrours, I have no objection to your publishing your play: and as you live at a great distance (Devonshire, I believe), if you will send it to me, I will convey it to the press.' I never heard more of it, ha! ha! ha!"

On Friday, April 10, I found Johnson at home in the morning. We resumed the conversation of yesterday. He put me in mind of some of it which had escaped my memory, and enabled me to record it more perfectly than I otherwise could have done. He was much pleased with my paying so great attention to his recommendation in 1763, the period when our acquaintance began, that I should keep a journal; and I could perceive he was secretly pleased to find so much of the fruit of his mind preserved; and as he had been used to imagine and say that he always laboured when he said a good thing,—it delighted him, on a review, to find that his conversation teemed with point and imagery.

I said to him, "You were yesterday, sir, in remarkably good humour; but there was nothing to offend you, nothing to produce irritation or violence. There was no bold offender. There was not one capital conviction. It was a maiden assize. You had on your white gloves [3]."

He found fault with our friend Langton for having been too silent. "Sir," said I, "you will recollect that he very properly took up Sir Joshua for being glad that Charles Fox had praised Goldsmith's 'Traveller,' and you joined him." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, I knocked Fox on the head, without ceremony. Reynolds is too much under Fox and Burke at present [4]. He is under the *Fox Star*, and the *Irish constellation*. He is always under some planet." BOSWELL. "There is no Fox star [5]." JOHNSON. "But there is a dog star." BOSWELL. "They say, indeed, a fox and a dog are the same animal."

I reminded him of a gentleman who, Mrs. Cholmondeley said, was first talkative from affectation, and then silent from the same cause; that he first thought "I shall be celebrated as the liveliest man in every company;" and then, all at once, "O! it is much more respectable to be grave and look wise." "He has reversed the Pythagorean discipline, by being first talkative, and then silent. He reverses the course of nature too; he was first the gay butterfly, and then the creeping worm." Johnson laughed loud and long at this expansion and illustration of what he himself had told me.

We dined together with Mr. Scott (now Sir William Scott, his majesty's advocate general), at his chambers in the Temple, nobody else there. The company being small, Johnson was not in such spirits as he had been the preceding day, and for a

[1] It was called "The Siege of Aleppo." Mr. Hawkins, the authour of it, was formerly professor of poetry at Oxford. It is printed in his "Miscellanies," 3 vols. 8vo.—BOSWELL.

[2] Garrick had high authority for this expression. Dryden uses it in his preface to "Œdipus."—MALONE. [And surely "*concoction*" alone was as good as "*first* concoction," which latter phrase Johnson was willing to admit.—ED.]

[3] [At an assize, where there has been no capital conviction, the judge receives a pair of white gloves.—ED.]

[4] [This seems to support the Editor's conjecture, as to Mr. Fox, *ante*, v. i. p. 309.—ED.]

[5] [There is a constellation called the *Fox*.—ED.]

considerable time little was said. At last he burst forth: "Subordination is sadly broken down in this age. No man, now, has the same authority which his father had—except a gaoler. No master has it over his servants; it is diminished in our colleges; nay, in our grammar-schools." BOSWELL. "What is the cause of this, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, the coming in of the Scotch," laughing sarcastically. BOSWELL. "That is to say, things have been turned topsy-turvy.—But your serious cause." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, there are many causes, the chief of which is, I think, the great increase of money. No man now depends upon the lord of a manor, when he can send to another country and fetch provisions. The shoe-black at the entry of my court does not depend on me. I can deprive him but of a penny a day, which he hopes somebody else will bring him; and that penny I must carry to another shoe-black, so the trade suffers nothing. I have explained in my 'Journey to the Hebrides,' how gold and silver destroy feudal subordination. But, besides, there is a general relaxation of reverence. No son now depends upon his father, as in former times. Paternity used to be considered as of itself a great thing, which had a right to many claims. That is, in general, reduced to very small bounds. My hope is, that as anarchy produces tyranny, this extreme relaxation will produce *freni strictio.*"

Talking of fame, for which there is so great a desire, I observed, how little there is of it in reality, compared with the other objects of human attention. "Let every man recollect, and he will be sensible how small a part of his time is employed in talking or thinking of Shakspeare, Voltaire, or any of the most celebrated men that have ever lived, or are now supposed to occupy the attention and admiration of the world. Let this be extracted and compressed; into what a narrow space will it go!" I then slily introduced Mr. Garrick's fame, and his assuming the airs of a great man. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is wonderful how *little* Garrick assumes. No, sir, Garrick *fortunam reverenter habet.* Consider, sir; celebrated men such as you have mentioned, have had their applause at a distance; but Garrick had it dashed in his face, sounded in his ears, and went home every night with the plaudits of a thousand in his *cranium.* Then, sir, Garrick did not *find,* but *made* his way to the tables, the levees, and almost the bed-chambers of the great. Then, sir, Garrick had under him a numerous body of people; who, from fear of his power, and hopes of his favour, and admiration of his talents, were constantly submissive to him. And here is a man who has advanced the dignity of his profession. Garrick has made a player a higher character." SCOTT "And he is a very sprightly writer too." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and all this supported by great wealth of his own acquisition. If all this had happened to me, I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me, to knock down every body that stood in the way. Consider, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they 'd have jumped over the moon. Yet Garrick speaks to *us*" (smiling). BOSWELL. "And Garrick is a very good man a charitable man." JOHNSON. "Sir, a liberal man. He has given away more money than any man in England. There may be a little vanity mixed: but he has shown, that money is not his first object[1]." BOSWELL. "Yet Foote used to say of him, that he walked out with an intention to do a generous action; but, turning the corner of a street, he met with the ghost of a half-penny, which frightened him." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that is very true, too; for I never knew a man of whom it could be said with less certainty to-day, what he will do to-morrow, than Garrick; it depends so much on his humour at the time." SCOTT. "I am glad to hear of his liberality. He has been represented as very saving." JOHNSON. "With his domestic saving we have nothing to do. I remember drinking tea with him long ago,

[1] [Miss Hawkins says, "At Hampton, and in its neighbourhood, Mr. and Mrs. Garrick took the rank of the *noblesse*—every thing was in good taste, and his establishment distinguished—he drove four horses when going to town." She adds the following description of his personal appearance: "I see him now in a dark blue coat, the button-holes bound with gold, a small cocked hat laced with gold, his waistcoat very open, and his countenance never at rest, and, indeed, seldom his person; for, in the relaxation of the country, he gave way to all his natural volatility, and with my father was perfectly at ease, sometimes sitting on a table, and then, if he saw my brothers at a distance on the lawn, shooting off like an arrow out of a bow in a spirited chase of them round the garden. I remember—when my father, having me in his hand, met him on the common, riding his pretty pony—his moving my compassion by lamenting the misery of being summoned to town in hot weather (I think August, to play before the King of Denmark. I thought him sincere, and his case pitiable, till my father assured me that he was in reality very well pleased, and that what he groaned at as labour, was an honour paid to his talents. The natural expression of his countenance was far from placidity. I confess I was afraid of him; more so than I was of Johnson, whom I knew not to be, nor could suppose he ever would be thought to be, an extraordinary man. Garrick had a frown and spoke impetuously. Johnson was slow and kind in his way to children."—*Miss Hawkins's Memoirs* vol. i p 21.—ED.]

when Peg Woffington made it, and he grumbled at her for making it too strong[1]. He had then begun to feel money in his purse, and did not know when he should have enough of it." [The generosity of David Garrick to the late Mr. Berenger[2], who had fallen into distress by wit or by negligence, was as memorable and as meritorious. He sent him back his securities for 500*l.* with a donation of a bank note of 300*l.*] Tyers, p. 75.

On the subject of wealth, the proper use of it, and the effect of that art which is called economy, he observed, "It is wonderful to think how men of very large estates not only spend their yearly incomes, but are often actually in want of money. It is clear they have not value for what they spend. Lord Shelburne[3] told me, that a man of high rank, who looks into his own affairs, may have all that he ought to have, all that can be of any use, or appear with any advantage, for five thousand pounds a year. Therefore, a great proportion must go in waste; and indeed, this is the case with most people, whatever their fortune is." Boswell. "I have no doubt, sir, of this. But how is it? What is waste?" Johnson. "Why, sir, breaking bottles, and a thousand other things. Waste cannot be accurately told, though we are sensible how destructive it is. Economy on the one hand, by which a certain income is made to maintain a man genteelly, and waste on the other, by which, on the same income, another man lives shabbily, cannot be defined. It is a very nice thing; as one man wears his coat out much sooner than another, we cannot tell how."

We talked of war. Johnson. "Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea." Boswell. "Lord Mansfield does not." Johnson. "Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of general officers and admirals who have been in service, he would shrink; he'd wish to creep under the table." Boswell. "No; he'd think he could *try* them all." Johnson. "Yes, if he could catch them: but they'd try him much sooner. No, sir; were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say, 'Follow me, and hear a lecture in philosophy;' and Charles, laying his hand on his sword, to say, 'Follow me, and dethrone the Czar,' a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates Sir, the impression is universal; yet it is strange. As to the sailor, when you look down from the quarter-deck to the space below, you see the utmost extremity of human misery; such crowding, such filth, such stench!" Boswell. "Yet sailors are happy." Johnson. "They are happy as brutes are happy, with a piece of fresh meat —with the grossest sensuality. But, sir, the profession of soldiers and sailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverence those who have got over fear, which is so general a weakness." Scott "But is not courage mechanical, and to be acquired" Johnson. "Why yes, sir, in a collective sense. Soldiers consider themselves only as part of a great machine." Scott. "We find people fond of being sailors." Johnson. "I cannot account for that, any more than I can account for other strange perversions of imagination." His abhorrence of the profession of a sailor was uniformly violent; but in conversation he always exalted the profession of a soldier. And yet I have, in my large and various collection of his writings, a letter to an eminent friend, in which he expresses himself thus: "My god-son called on me lately. He is weary, and rationally weary, of a military life. If you can place him in some other state, I think you may increase his happiness, and secure his virtue. A soldier's time is passed in distress and danger, or in idleness and corruption." Such was his cool reflection in his study; but whenever he was warmed and animated by the presence of company, he, like other philosophers whose minds are impregnated with poetical fancy, caught the common enthusiasm for splendid renown.

He talked of Mr. Charles Fox, of whose abilities he thought highly, but observed, that he did not talk much at our Club. "I have heard Mr. Gibbon remark, "that Mr. Fox could not be afraid of Dr. Johnson; yet he certainly was very shy of saying any thing in Dr. Johnson's presence." Mr Scott now quoted what was said of Alcibiades by a Greek poet, to which Johnson assented[4].

[1] When Johnson told this little anecdote to Sir Joshua Reynolds, he mentioned a circumstance which he omitted to-day—"Why," said Garrick, "it is as red as blood."—Boswell.

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 258.—Ed.]

[3] [It does not appear when or how he was acquainted with Lord Shelburne. Probably he may have met him at his brother's, Mr. Fitzmaurice's. See *post*, May 7th, 1780.—Ed.]

[4] Wishing to discover the ancient observation here referred to, I applied to Sir William Scott on the subject, but he had no recollection of it. My old and very learned friend, Dr. Michael Kearney, formerly senior fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and now Archdeacon of Raphoe in Ireland, has, however, most happily elucidated this passage. He remarks to me that "Mr. Boswell's memory must here have deceived him; and that Mr. Scott's observation must have been, that 'Mr. Fox, in the instance mentioned, might be considered as the *reverse* of *Phœax;*' of whom, as Plutarch relates in the Life of Alcibiades, Eupolis, the tragedian, said, It is true he can *talk*,

He told us, that he had given Mrs. Montagu a catalogue of all Daniel Defoe's works of imagination[1]; most, if not all of which, as well as of his other works, he now enumerated, allowing a considerable share of merit to a man, who, bred a tradesman, had written so variously and so well. Indeed, his "Robinson Crusoe" is enough of itself to establish his reputation.

He expressed great indignation at the imposture of the Cock-lane ghost, and related, with much satisfaction, how he had assisted in detecting the cheat, and had published an account of it in the newspapers. Upon this subject I incautiously offended him, by pressing him with too many questions, and he showed his displeasure[2]. I apologised, saying, that "I asked questions in order to be instructed and entertained; I repaired eagerly to the fountain; but that the moment he gave me a hint, the moment he put a lock upon the well, I desisted." "But, sir," said he, "that is forcing one to do a disagreeable thing:" and he continued to rate me. "Nay, sir," said I, "when you have put a lock upon the well, so that I can no longer drink, do not make the fountain of your wit play upon me and wet me."

He sometimes could not bear being teased with questions. I was once present when a gentleman asked so many, as, "What did you do, sir?" "What did you say, sir?" that he at last grew enraged, and said, "I will not be put to the *question*. Do n't you consider, sir, that these are not the manners of a gentleman? I will not be baited with *what* and *why;* what is this? what is that? why is a cow's tail long? why is a fox's tail bushy?" The gentleman, who was a good deal out of countenance, said, "Why, sir, you are so good, that I venture to trouble you." JOHNSON. "Sir, my being so *good* is no reason why you should be so *ill*."

Talking of the Justitia hulk at Woolwich, in which criminals were punished, by being confined to labour, he said, "I do not see that they are punished by this: they must have worked equally, had they never been guilty of stealing. They now only work; so, after all, they have gained; what they stole is clear gain to them; the confinement is nothing. Every man who works is confined: the smith to his shop, the tailor to his garret." BOSWELL. "And Lord Mansfield to his court." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir. You know the notion of confinement may be extended, as in the song, 'Every island is a prison.' There is in Dodsley's collection a copy of verses to the authour of that song[3]."

Smith's Latin verses on Pococke, the great traveller[4], were mentioned. He repeated some of them, and said they were Smith's best verses.

He talked with an uncommon animation of travelling into distant countries; that the mind was enlarged by it, and that an acquisition of dignity of character was derived from it. He expressed a particular enthusiasm with respect to visiting the wall of China. I catched it for the moment, and said I really believed I should go and see the wall of China had I not children, of whom it was my duty to take care. "Sir," said he, "by doing so, you would do what would be of importance in raising your children to eminence There would be a lustre reflected upon them from your spirit and curiosity. They would be at all times regarded as the children of a man who had gone to view the wall of China. I am serious, sir."

When we had left Mr. Scott's, he said, "Will you go home with me?" "Sir," said I, "it is late; but I 'll go with you for three minutes." JOHNSON. "Or *four*." We went to Mrs. Williams's room, where we found Mr. Allen the printer, who was the landlord of his house in Bolt-court, a worthy, obliging man, and his very old acquaintance; and what was exceedingly amusing, though he was of a very diminutive size, he used, even in Johnson's pre

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and yet he is no *speaker*." If this discovery had been made by a scholiast on an ancient authour, with what ardour and exuberant praise would Bentley or Taylor have spoken of it! Sir William Scott, to whom I communicated Dr. Kearney's remark, is perfectly satisfied that it is correct. A few other observations have been communicated by the same gentleman. Every classical reader will lament that they are not more numerous.—MALONE.

[1] [Probably the list which is to be found in *Cibber's Lives* —ED.]

[2] [He had little to be proud of in this affair, and, *therefore*, was angry when Boswell pressed him See *ante*, vol. i. p. 183.—ED.]

[3] I have in vain examined Dodsley's Collection for the verses here referred to; nor has the name of the authour been ascertained. The song alluded to begins with the words,

"Welcome, welcome, brother debtor;"

it consists of several stanzas, in one of which it is said, that (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 410.)

"Every island is a prison."—MALONE.

[4] Smith's Verses are on Edward Pococke, the great oriental linguist: he travelled, it is true; but Dr. Richard Pococke, late Bishop of Ossory, who published Travels through the East, is usually called the *great traveller*.—KEARNEY. [Edward Pococke was Canon of Christ Church and Hebrew Professor in Oxford. The two Pocockes flourished just a century apart; the one, Edward, being born in 1604; Richard, in the year 1704 —HALL.]

sence, to imitate the stately periods and slow and solemn utterance of the great man. I this evening boasted, that although I did not write what is called stenography, or short-hand, in appropriated characters devised for the purpose, I had a method of my own of writing half words, and leaving out some altogether, so as yet to keep the substance and language of any discourse which I had heard so much in view, that I could give it very completely soon after I had taken it down. He defied me, as he had once defied an actual short-hand writer; and he made the experiment by reading slowly and distinctly a part of Robertson's "History of America," while I endeavoured to write it in my way of taking notes. It was found that I had it very imperfectly; the conclusion [1] from which was, that its excellence was principally owing to a studied arrangement of words, which could not be varied or abridged without an essential injury.

On Sunday, April 12, I found him at home before dinner; Dr. Dodd's poem, entitled "Thoughts in Prison," was lying upon his table. This appearing to me an extraordinary effort by a man who was in Newgate for a capital crime, I was desirous to hear Johnson's opinion of it: to my surprise, he told me he had not read a line of it. I took up the book and read a passage to him. JOHNSON. "Pretty well, if you are previously disposed to like them." I read another passage, with which he was better pleased. He then took the book into his own hands, and having looked at the prayer at the end of it, he said, "What *evidence* is there that this was composed the night before he suffered? *I do* not believe it." He then read aloud where he prays for the king, &c. and observed, "Sir, do you think that a man, the night before he is to be hanged, cares for the succession of a royal family? Though, he *may* have composed this prayer then. A man who has been canting all his life, may cant to the last. And yet a man who has been refused a pardon after so much petitioning, would hardly be praying thus fervently for the king [2]."

He, and I, and Mrs. Williams, went to dine with the Reverend Dr. Percy. Talking of Goldsmith, Johnson said, he was very envious. I defended him, by observing, that he owned it frankly upon all occasions. JOHNSON. "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had so much envy, that he could not conceal it. He was so full of it, that he overflowed. He talked of it, to be sure, often enough. Now, sir, what a man avows, he is not ashamed to think; though many a man thinks what he is ashamed to avow. We are all envious naturally; but by checking envy, we get the better of it. So we are all thieves naturally; a child always tries to get at what it wants the nearest way: by good instruction and good habits this is cured, till a man has not even an inclination to seize what is another's; has no struggle with himself about it."

And here I shall record a scene of too much heat between Dr. Johnson and Dr Percy, which I should have suppressed, were it not that it gave occasion to display the truly tender and benevolent heart of Johnson, who, as soon as he found a friend was at all hurt by any thing which he had "said in his wrath," was not only prompt and desirous to be reconciled, but exerted himself to make ample reparation.

Books of travels having been mentioned Johnson praised Pennant very highly, as he did at Dunvegan, in the Isle of Sky [3]. Dr Percy knowing himself to be the heir male of the ancient Percies [4], and having the

[1] [This is odd reasoning. Most readers would have come to the more obvious conclusion, that Boswell had failed in his experiment at short-hand. This passage may account for some verbal errors and obscurities in this work: when copying his notes, after a considerable lapse of time, Mr. Boswell probably misunderstood his own abbreviations.—ED.]

[2] [It does not seem consistent that Johnson should have *thus* spoken of one, in the sincerity of whose repentance he had so much confidence as to desire to have the *benefit of his prayers*, (*ante*, p. 108). The observation, too, on the prayer "for the king" seems inconsiderate; because, if Dodd was a sincere penitent, he would be anxious to reconcile himself with all mankind, and, as the king might have saved his life, and would not, Dodd's prayer for him was probably neither form nor flattery, (for what could *they* avail him at that hour?) but the proof of contrition, and of the absence of all personal resentment.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 395.—ED.]

[4] See this accurately stated, and the descent of his family from the Earls of Northumberland clearly deduced in the Rev. Dr. Nash's excellent "History of Worcestershire," vol. ii. p. 318. The Doctor has subjoined a note, in which he says, "The editor hath seen, and carefully examined the proofs of all the particulars above mentioned, now in the possession of the Rev Thomas Percy." The same proofs I have also myself carefully examined, and have seen some additional proofs which have occurred since the Doctor's book was published; and both as a lawyer accustomed to the consideration of evidence, and as a genealogist versed in the study of pedigrees, I am fully satisfied. I cannot help observing, as a circumstance of no small moment, that in tracing the Bishop of Dromore's genealogy, essential aid was given by the late Elizabeth Duchess of Northumberland, heiress of that illustrious house; a lady not only of high dignity of spirit, such as became her noble blood, but of excellent understanding and lively talents. With

warmest and most dutiful attachment to the noble house of Northumberland, could not sit quietly and hear a man praised, who had spoken disrespectfully of Alnwick Castle and the duke's pleasure-grounds, especially as he thought meanly of his travels. He therefore opposed Johnson eagerly. JOHNSON. "Pennant, in what he has said of Alnwick, has done what he intended; he has made you very angry." PERCY. "He has said the garden is trim, which is representing it like a citizen's parterre, when the truth is, there is a very large extent of fine turf and gravel walks." JOHNSON. "According to your own account, sir, Pennant is right. It *is* trim. Here is grass cut close, and gravel rolled smooth. Is not that trim? The extent is nothing against that; a mile may be as trim as a square yard. Your extent puts me in mind of the citizen's enlarged dinner, two pieces of roast-beef, and two puddings[1]. There is no variety, no mind exerted in laying out the ground, no trees." PERCY. "He pretends to give the natural history of Northumberland, and yet takes no notice of the immense number of trees planted there of late." JOHNSON. "That, sir, has nothing to do with the *natural* history; that is *civil* history. A man who gives the natural history of the oak, is not to tell how many oaks have been planted in this place or that. A man who gives the natural history of the cow, is not to tell how many cows are milked at Islington. The animal is the same, whether milked in the Park or at Islington." PERCY. "Pennant does not describe well; a carrier who goes along the side of Lochlomond would describe it better." JOHNSON. "I think he describes very well." PERCY. "I travelled after him." JOHNSON. "And *I* travelled after him." PERCY. "But, my good friend, you are short-sighted, and do not see so well as I do." I wondered at Dr. Percy's venturing thus Dr. Johnson said nothing at the time; but inflammable particles were collecting for a cloud to burst. In a little while Dr. Percy said something more in disparagement of Pennant. JOHNSON (pointedly). "This is the resentment of a narrow mind, because he did not find every thing in Northumberland." PERCY (feeling the stroke). "Sir, you may be as rude as you please." JOHNSON. "Hold, sir! Don't talk of rudeness: remember, sir, you told me," puffing hard with passion struggling for a vent, "I was short-sighted. We have done with civility. We are to be as rude as we please." PERCY. "Upon my honour, sir, I did not mean to be uncivil." JOHNSON. "I cannot say so, sir; for I *did* mean to be uncivil, thinking *you* had been uncivil." Dr. Percy rose, ran up to him, and taking him by the hand, assured him affectionately that his meaning had been misunderstood; upon which a reconciliation instantly took place. JOHNSON. "My dear sir, I am willing you shall *hang* Pennant." PERCY (resuming the former subject). "Pennant complains that the helmet is not hung out to invite to the hall of hospitality. Now I never heard that it was a custom to hang out a *helmet*[2]." JOHNSON. "Hang him up, hang him up." BOSWELL (humouring the joke). "Hang out his skull instead of a helmet, and you may drink ale out of it in your hall of Odin, as he is your enemy; that will be truly ancient. *There* will be 'Northern Antiquities[3].'" JOHNSON. "He's a *whig*, sir; a *sad dog*," smiling at his own violent expressions, merely for *political* difference of opinion: "but he's the best traveller I ever read; he observes more things than any one else does."

I could not help thinking that this was too high praise of a writer who traversed a wide extent of country in such haste, that he could put together only curt frittered fragments of his own, and afterwards procured supplemental intelligence from parochial ministers, and others not the best qualified or most partial narrators, whose ungenerous prejudice against the house of Stuart glares in misrepresentation; a writer, who at best treats merely of superficial objects, and shows no philosophical investigation of character and manners, such as Johnson has exhibited in his masterly "Journey" over part of the same ground; and who, it should seem from a desire of ingratiating himself with the Scotch, has flattered the people of North Britain so inordinately and

a fair pride I can boast of the honour of her grace's correspondence, specimens of which adorn my archives.—BOSWELL.

[1] [It is observable that the *same illustration* of the *same subject* is to be found in the *Heroick Epistle* to Sir William Chambers:

'For what is nature?—ring her changes round,
Her three fleet notes are water, plants, and ground;
Prolong the peal, yet spite of all your clatter,
The tedious chime is still ground, plants, and water.
So when some John his dull invention racks
To rival Boodle's dinners or Almack's,
Three uncouth legs of mutton shock our eyes,
Three roasted geese, three butter'd apple pies."

The *Heroick Epistle* had appeared in 1773; so that Johnson no doubt borrowed the idea from that spirited and pungent satire.—ED.]

[2] It certainly was a custom, as appears from the following passage in "Perceforest, vol. iii p. 108:—"Fasoient mettre au plus hault de leur hostel un *heaulme, en signe* que tous les gentils hommes et gentilles femmes entrassent hardiment en leur hostel comme en leur propre," &c.—KEARNEY. The authour's second son, Mr James Boswell, had noticed this passage in "Perceforest," and suggested to me the same remark.—MALONE.

[3] The title of a book translated by Dr. Percy—BOSWELL.

with so little discrimination, that the judicious and candid amongst them must be disgusted, while they value more the plain, just, yet kindly report of Johnson.

Having impartially censured Mr. Pennant, as a Traveller in Scotland, let me allow him, from authorities much better than mine, his deserved praise as an able zoologist; and let me also, from my own understanding and feelings, acknowledge the merit of his "London," which, though said to be not quite accurate in some particulars, is one of the most pleasing topographical performances that ever appeared in any language. Mr. Pennant, like his countrymen in general, has the true spirit of a *gentleman.* As a proof of it, I shall quote from his "London" the passage in which he speaks of my illustrious friend.

"I must by no means omit *Bolt-court*, the long residence of Dr. Samuel Johnson, a man of the strongest natural abilities, great learning, a most retentive memory, of the deepest and most unaffected piety and morality, mingled with those numerous weaknesses and prejudices which his friends have kindly taken care to draw from their dread abode[1]. I brought on myself his transient anger, by observing that in his tour in Scotland, he once had long and woful experience of oats being the food of men in Scotland as they were of horses in England. It was a national reflection unworthy of him, and I shot my bolt. In turn he gave me a tender hug[2]. *Con amore* he also said of me, '*The dog is a whig*[3].' I admired the virtues of Lord Russel, and pitied his fall. I should have been a whig at the Revolution. There have been periods since in which I should have been, what I now am, a moderate tory, a supporter, as far as my little influence extends, of a well-poised balance between the crown and the people; but should the scale preponderate against the *salus populi*, that moment may it be said, '*The* dog 's a *whig!*'"

We had a calm after the storm, staid the evening and supped, and were pleasant and gay. But Dr. Percy told me he was very uneasy at what had passed; for there was a gentleman there who was acquainted with the Northumberland family, to whom he hoped to have appeared more respectable, by showing how intimate he was with Dr. Johnson, and who might now, on the contrary, go away with an opinion to his disadvantage. He begged I would mention this to Dr. Johnson, which I afterwards did. His observation upon it was, "This comes of *stratagem;* had he told me that he wished to appear to advantage before that gentleman, he should have been at the top of the house all the time." He spoke of Dr. Percy in the handsomest manner. "Then, sir," said I, "may I be allowed to suggest a mode by which you may effectually counteract any unfavourable report of what passed? I will write a letter to you upon the subject of the unlucky contest of that day, and you will be kind enough to put in writing, as an answer to that letter, what you have now said, and as Lord Percy is to dine with us at General Paoli's soon, I will take an opportunity to read the correspondence in his lordship's presence." This friendly scheme was accordingly carried into execution without Dr. Percy's knowledge. Johnson's letter placed Dr. Percy's unquestionable merit in the fairest point of view; and I contrived that Lord Percy should hear the correspondence, by introducing it at General Paoli's as an instance of Dr. Johnson's kind disposition towards one in whom his lordship was interested. Thus every unfavourable impression was obviated that could possibly have been made on those by whom he wished most to be regarded. I breakfasted the day after with him, and informed him of my scheme, and its happy completion, for which he thanked me in the warmest terms, and was highly delighted with Dr. Johnson's letter in his praise, of which I gave him a copy. He said, "I would rather have this than degrees from all the universities in Europe It will be for me, and my children and grandchildren." Dr. Johnson having afterwards asked me if I had given him a copy of it, and being told I had, was offended, and insisted that I should get it back, which I did. As, however, he did not desire me to destroy either the original or the copy, or forbid me to let it be seen, I think myself at liberty to apply to it his general declaration to me concerning his own letters, "That he did not choose they should be published in his life-time; but had no objection to their appearing after his death." I shall therefore insert this kindly correspondence, having faithfully narrated the circumstances accompanying it.

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I beg leave to address you in behalf of our friend Dr. Percy, who was much hurt by what you said to him that day we dined at his house[4]; when, in

[1] This is the common cant against faithful biography. Does the worthy gentleman mean that I, who was taught discrimination of character by Johnson, should have omitted his frailties, and, in short, have *bedawbed* him as the worthy gentleman has bedawbed Scotland?—BOSWELL.

[2] See Dr. Johnson's "Journey to the Western Islands," p. 296; see his Dictionary article, *oats;* and my "Voyage to the Hebrides," first edition. —PENNANT.

[3] Mr. Boswell's Journal *ante*, vol. i. p. 375. PENNANT.

[4] Sunday, April 12, 1778.—BOSWELL.

the course of the dispute as to Pennant's merit as a traveller, you told Percy that 'he had the resentment of a narrow mind against Pennant, because he did not find every thing in Northumberland.' Percy is sensible that you did not mean to injure him; but he is vexed to think that your behaviour to him on that occasion may be interpreted as a proof that he is despised by you, which I know is not the case. I have told him, that the charge of being narrow-minded was only as to the particular point in question; and that he had the merit of being a martyr to his noble family.

"Earl Percy is to dine with General Paoli next Friday; and I should be sincerely glad to have it in my power to satisfy his lordship how well you think of Dr. Percy, who, I find, apprehends that your good opinion of him may be of very essential consequence; and who assures me that he has the highest respect and the warmest affection for you.

"I have only to add, that my suggesting this occasion for the exercise of your candour and generosity is altogether unknown to Dr. Percy, and proceeds from my goodwill towards him, and my persuasion that you will be happy to do him an essential kindness. I am, more and more, my dear sir, your most faithful and affectionate humble servant "JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
"23d April, 1778.

"SIR,—The debate between Dr. Percy and me is one of those foolish controversies which begin upon a question of which neither party cares how it is decided, and which is, nevertheless, continued to acrimony, by the vanity with which every man resists confutation. Dr. Percy's warmth proceeded from a cause which, perhaps, does him more honour than he could have derived from juster criticism. His abhorrence of Pennant proceeded from his opinion that Pennant had wantonly and indecently censured his patron. His anger made him resolve, that, for having been once wrong, he never should be right. Pennant has much in his notions that I do not like; but still I think him a very intelligent traveller. If Percy is really offended, I am sorry; for he is a man whom I never knew to offend any one. He is a man very willing to learn, and very able to teach; a man, out of whose company I never go without having learned something. It is sure that he vexes me sometimes, but I am afraid it is by making me feel my own ignorance. So much extension of mind, and so much minute accuracy of inquiry, if you survey your whole circle of acquaintance, you will find so scarce, if you find it at all, that you will value Percy by comparison. Lord Hailes is somewhat like him: but Lord Hailes does not, perhaps, go beyond him in research; and I do not know that he equals him in elegance. Percy's attention to poetry has given grace and splendour to his studies of antiquity. A mere antiquarian is a rugged being.

"Upon the whole, you see that what I might say in sport or petulance to him, is very consistent with full conviction of his merit. I am, dear sir, your most, &c.
'SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REV. DR. PERCY, NORTHUMBERLAND-HOUSE.
"South Audley-street, 25th April

"DEAR SIR,—I wrote to Dr. Johnson on the subject of the *Pennantian* controversy; and have received from him an answer which will delight you. I read it yesterday to Dr. Robertson, at the Exhibition; and at dinner to Lord Percy, General Oglethorpe, &c. who dined with us at General Paoli's; who was also a witness to the high *testimony* to your honour.

"General Paoli desires the favour of your company next Tuesday to dinner, to meet Dr. Johnson. If I can, I will call on you to-day. I am, with sincere regard your most obedient humble servant,
"JAMES BOSWELL[1]."

[It has been already stated[2], that there seems reason to doubt whether Johnson had any great regard or respect for Dr. Percy. The following anecdotes will throw some light on that subject. Mr. Cradock happened to be in London once when Dr. Percy returned from Northumberland, and found that he was expected to preach a charity sermon almost immediately; this had escaped his memory, and he said, that "though much fatigued, he had been obliged to sit up very late to furnish out something from former discourses; but suddenly recollecting that Johnson's fourth Idler was exactly to his purpose, he had freely engrafted the greatest part of it." He preached, and his discourse was much admired; but being requested to print it, he most strenuously opposed the honour intended him, till he was assured by the governors, that it was absolutely necessary, as the annual contributions greatly depended on the account that

Ed

Crad. Mem. p. 241

[1] Though the Bishop of Dromore kindly answered the letters which I wrote to him, relative to Dr. Johnson's early history; yet, in justice to him, I think it proper to add, that the account of the foregoing conversation, and the subsequent transaction, as well as of some other conversations in which he is mentioned, has been given to the publick without previous communication with his lordship.—BOSWELL.

[2] See *ante*, p 40.—ED

was given in the appendix. In this dilemma, he earnestly requested that Mr. Cradock would call upon Dr. Johnson, and state particulars. Mr. Cradock assented, and endeavoured to introduce the subject with all due solemnity; but Johnson was highly diverted with his recital, and, laughing, said, "Pray, sir, give my kind respects to Dr. Percy, and tell him, I desire he will do whatever he pleases in regard to my Idler; it is entirely at his service."

But these days of friendly communication were, from various causes, speedily to pass away, and worse than indifference to succeed; for one morning Dr. Percy said to Mr. Cradock, "I have not seen Dr. Johnson for a long time. I believe I must just call upon him, and greatly wish that you would accompany me. I intend," said he, "to tease him a little about Gibbon's pamphlet[1]." "I hope not, Dr. Percy," was Cradock's reply. "Indeed I shall, for I have a great pleasure in combating his narrow prejudices." They went together; and Dr. Percy opened with some anecdotes from Northumberland-house; mentioned some rare books that were in the library; and then threw out that the town rang with applause of Gibbon's "Reply to Davis," that the latter "had written before he had read," and that the two "confederate doctors," as Mr. Gibbon termed them, "had fallen into some strange errors."

Johnson said, he knew nothing of Davis's pamphlet, nor would he give him any answer as to Gibbon; but, if the "confederate doctors," as they were termed, had really made such mistakes, as he alluded to, they were blockheads.

Dr. Percy talked on in the most careless style possible, but in a very lofty tone; and Johnson appeared to be excessively angry. Mr. Cradock only wished to get released; for, if Dr. Percy had proceeded to inform him, that he had lately introduced Mr. Hume to dine at the king's chaplains' table, there must have been an "explosion."

Mr. Cradock possessed several letters which threw a full light on these unhappy differences; and with all his partiality for Dr. Johnson, Mr. Cradock freely declared, that he thought Dr. Percy had received very great cause to take real offence at Dr. Johnson, who, by a ludicrous parody on a stanza in the "Hermit of Warkworth," had rendered him contemptible. It was urged, that Johnson only meant to attack the metre; but he certainly turned the whole poem into ridicule.

"I put my hat upon my head,
And walk'd into the Strand,
And there I met another man
With his hat in his hand."

[Published in 1779.—Ed.]

Mr. Garrick, in the postscript of a letter to Mr. Cradock, soon afterwards asked him, "Whether he had seen Johnson's *criticism on the Hermit?* it is already," said he, "over half the town." Almost the last time that Mr. Cradock ever saw Johnson, he said to him, "Notwithstanding all the pains that Dr. Farmer and I took to serve Dr. Percy, in regard to his 'Ancient Ballads,' he has left town for Ireland[2], without taking leave of either of us"]

On Monday, April 13, I dined with Johnson at Mr. Langton's, where were Dr. Porteus, then Bishop of Chester, afterwards of London, and Dr. Stinton. He was at first in a very silent mood. Before dinner he said nothing but "Pretty baby," to one of the children. Langton said very well to me afterwards, that he could repeat Dr. Johnson's conversation before dinner, as Johnson had said that he could repeat a complete chapter of "The Natural History of Iceland," from the Danish of *Horrebow*, the whole of which was exactly thus:

"CHAP. LXXII.—*Concerning Snakes.*

"There are no snakes to be met with thoughout the whole island."

At dinner we talked of another mode in the news-papers of giving modern characters in sentences from the classicks, and of the passage

"Parcus deorum cultor, et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro, nunc retrorsùm
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos," HOR. OD. i. 39.

being well applied to Soame Jenyns; who, after having wandered in the wilds of infidelity, had returned to the Christian faith. Mr. Langton asked Johnson as to the propriety of *sapientiæ consultus*. JOHNSON. "Though *consultus* was primarily an adjective, like *amicus* it came to be used as a substantive. So we have *Juris consultus* a consult in law."

We talked of the styles of different painters, and how certainly a connoisseur could distinguish them. I asked, if there was as clear a difference of styles in language as in painting, or even as in hand-writing, so that the composition of every individual may be distinguished? JOHNSON. "Yes. Those who have a style of eminent excellence, such as Dryden and Milton, can always be distinguished." I had no doubt of this; but what I wanted to know was, whether there was really a peculiar style to every man whatever, as there is certainly a peculiar hand-writing, a peculiar countenance, not widely different in many, yet always enough to be distinctive:

[2] [Dr. Percy was made Bishop of Dromore in 1782.—Ed.]

"——————— facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen."——
Ov. Met. l. 2. v. 13.

The bishop thought not; and said, he supposed that many pieces in Dodsley's collection of poems, though all very pretty, had nothing appropriate in their style, and in that particular could not be at all distinguished. Johnson. "Why, sir, I think every man whatever has a peculiar style which may be discovered by nice examination and comparison with others: but a man must write a great deal to make his style obviously discernible. As logicians say, this appropriation of style is infinite *in potestate*, limited *in actu*."

Mr. Topham Beauclerk came in the evening, and he and Dr. Johnson and I staid to supper. It was mentioned that Dr. Dodd[1] had once wished to be a member of the Literary Club. Johnson. "I should be sorry if any of our Club were hanged. I will not say but some of them deserve it[2]." Beauclerk (supposing this to be aimed at persons[3] for whom he had at that time a wonderful fancy, which, however, did not last long) was irritated, and eagerly said, "You, sir, have a friend[4] (naming him) who deserves to be hanged; for he speaks behind their backs against those with whom he lives on the best terms, and attacks them in the newspapers. *He* certainly ought to be *kicked*." Johnson. "Sir, we all do this in some degree: '*Veniam petimus damusque vicissim*.' To be sure it may be done so much, that a man may deserve to be kicked." Beauclerk. "He is very malignant." Johnson. "No, sir; he is not malignant. He is mischievous, if you will. He would do no man an essential injury; he may, indeed, love to make sport of people by vexing their vanity. I, however, once knew an old gentleman who was absolutely malignant. He really wished evil to others, and rejoiced at it." Boswell. "The gentleman, Mr. Beauclerk, against whom you are so violent, is, I know, a man of good principles." Beauclerk. "Then he does not wear them out in practice." Hor. Art. Poet. 11.

Dr. Johnson, who, as I have observed before, delighted in discrimination of character, and having a masterly knowledge of human nature, was willing to take men as they are, imperfect, and with a mixture of good and bad qualities, I suppose thought he had said enough in defence of his friend, of whose merits, notwithstanding his exceptionable points, he had a just value: and added no more on the subject.

On Tuesday, 14th April, I dined with him at General Oglethorpe's, with General Paoli and Mr. Langton. General Oglethorpe declaimed against luxury. Johnson. "Depend upon it, sir, every state of society is as luxurious as it can be. Men always take the best they can get." Oglethorpe. "But the best depends much upon ourselves; and if we can be as well satisfied with plain things, we are in the wrong to accustom our palates to what is high-seasoned and expensive. What says Addison in his 'Cato,' speaking of the Numidian?

'Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase;
Amid the running stream he slakes his thirst,
Toils all the day, and at the approach of night,
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn;
And if the following day he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.'

Let us have *that* kind of luxury, sir, if you will." Johnson. "But hold, sir; to be merely satisfied is not enough. It is in refinement and elegance that the civilized man differs from the savage. A great part of our industry, and all our ingenuity, is exercised in procuring pleasure; and, sir, a hungry man has not the same pleasure in eating a plain dinner, that a hungry man

[1] [Miss Reynolds and Sir J. Hawkins doubted whether Johnson had ever been in Dodd's company; but Johnson told Boswell (see *ante*, page 105), that "he had once been." The editor has now before him a letter, dated in 1750, from Dr. Dodd to his friend the Rev. Mr. Parkhurst, the lexicographer, mentioning this meeting; and his account, at that day, of the man with whom he was afterward to have so painful a correspondence, is interesting and curious. "I spent yesterday afternoon with Johnson, the celebrated authour of *The Rambler*, who is of all others the oddest and most peculiar fellow I ever saw. He is six feet high, has a violent convulsion in his head, and his eyes are distorted. He speaks roughly and loud, listens to no man's opinions, thoroughly pertinacious of his own. Good sense flows from him in all he utters, and he seems possessed of a prodigious fund of knowledge, which he is not at all reserved in communicating; but in a manner so obstinate, ungenteel, and boorish, as renders it disagreeable and dissatisfactory. In short, it is impossible for words to describe him. He seems often inattentive to what passes in company, and then looks like a person possessed by some superior spirit. I have been reflecting on him ever since I saw him. He is a man of most universal and surprising genius, but in himself particular beyond expression."—Ed.]

[2] See *ante*, p. 90, *n.*—Boswell.

[3] [Probably Mr. Fox, Lord Spencer, Mr. Burke, and some other whigs, the violence of whose *opposition* at this time seemed to Johnson little short of abetting *rebellion*, for which they "deserved to be hanged."—Ed.]

[4] [No doubt George Steevens (now Johnson's colleague in editing Shakspeare), to whom such practices were imputed, and particularly as against Garrick and Mr. Arthur Murphy.—*Miss Hawk Mem* i. 39.—Ed.]

has in eating a luxurious dinner. You see I put the case fairly. A hungry man may have as much, nay, more pleasure in eating a plain dinner, than a man grown fastidious has in eating a luxurious dinner. But I suppose the man who decides between the two dinners to be equally a hungry man."

Talking of the different governments,—JOHNSON. "The more contracted power is, the more easily it is destroyed. A country governed by a despot is an inverted cone. Government there cannot be so firm as when it rests upon a broad basis gradually contracted, as the government of Great Britain, which is founded on the parliament, then is in the privy council, then in the king." BOSWELL. "Power, when contracted into the person of a despot, may be easily destroyed, as the prince may be cut off. So Caligula wished that the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might cut them off at a blow." OGLETHORPE. It was of the senate he wished that [1]. The senate by its usurpation controlled both the emperour and the people. And do n't you think that we see too much of that in our own parliament?"

Dr. Johnson endeavoured to trace the etymology of Maccaronick verses, which he thought were of Italian invention, from Maccaroni; but on being informed that this would infer that they were the most common and easy verses, maccaroni being the most ordinary and simple food, he was at a loss; for he said, "He rather should have supposed it to import, in its primitive signification, a composition of several things [2]; for Maccaronick verses are verses made out of a mixture of different languages, that is, of one language with the termination of another." I suppose we scarcely know of a language in any country, where there is any learning, in which that motley ludicrous species of composition may not be found. It is particularly droll in Low Dutch. The "*Polemo-middinia*" of Drummond, of Hawthornden, in which there is a jumble of many languages moulded, as if it were all in Latin, is well known Mr. Langton made us laugh heartily at one in the Grecian mould, by Joshua Barnes, in which are to be found such comical *Anglo-hellenisms* as κλυϐϐοισιν εϐανχθεν: they were banged with clubs.

On Wednesday, 15th April, I dined with Dr. Johnson at Mr. Dilly's, and was in high spirits, for I had been a good part of the morning with Mr. Orme, the able and eloquent historian of Hindostan, who expressed a great admiration of Johnson. "I do not care," said he, "on what subject Johnson talks; but I love better to hear him talk than any body. He either gives you new thoughts, or a new colouring. It is a shame to the nation that he has not been more liberally rewarded. Had I been George the Third, and thought as he did about America, I would have given Johnson three hundred a year for his 'Taxation no Tyranny,' alone." I repeated this, and Johnson was much pleased with such praise from such a man as Orme.

At Mr. Dilly's to-day were Mrs. Knowles [3], the ingenious quaker lady, Miss Seward, the poetess of Lichfield, the Reverend Dr. Mayo, and the Rev. Mr. Beresford, tutor to the Duke of Bedford. Before dinner Dr. Johnson seized upon Mr. Charles Sheridan's [4] "Account of the late Revolution in Sweden," and seemed to read it ravenously, as if he devoured it, which was to all appearance his method of studying. "He knows how to read better than any one," says Mrs. Knowles; "he gets at the substance of a book directly; he tears out the heart of it." He kept it wrapt up in the tablecloth in his lap during the time of dinner, from an avidity to have one entertainment in readiness, when he should have finished another; resembling (if I may use so coarse a simile) a dog who holds a bone in his paws in reserve, while he eats something else which has been thrown to him.

The subject of cookery having been very naturally introduced at a table where Johnson, who boasted of the niceness of his palate, owned that, "he always found a good dinner," he said "I could write a better book of cookery than has ever yet been written; it should be a book upon philosophical principles. Pharmacy is now made much more simple. Cookery may be made so too. A prescription which is now compounded of five ingredients, had formerly fifty in it. So in cookery, if the nature of the ingredients be well known, much fewer will do. Then, as you cannot make bad meat good, I would tell what is the best butcher's meat, the best beef, the best pieces; how to choose

[1] [Boswell was right, and Oglethorpe wrong; the exclamation in Suetonius is "Utinam *populus* Romanus unam cervicem haberet." *Calig.* xxx. —ED.]

[2] Dr. Johnson was right in supposing that this kind of poetry derived its name from *maccherone*. "Ars ista poetica (says Merlin Coccaie, whose true name was Theophilo Folengo) nuncupatur ars macaronica, a *macaronibus* derivata; qui *macarones* sunt quoddam pulmentum, farina, caseo, butyro compaginatum, grossum, rude, et rusticanum. Ideo macaronica nil nisi grossedinem, ruditatem, et vocabulazzos debet in se continere." Warton's Hist. of Eng. Poet. ii. 357. Folengo's assumed name was taken up in consequence of his having been instructed in his youth by Virago Coccaio. He died in 1544.—MALONE.

[3] [See *ante*, p. 77.—ED.]

[4] The elder brother of Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan. He died in 1806.—MALONE.

young fowls; the proper seasons of different vegetables; and then how to roast and boil and compound." DILLY. "Mrs. Glasse's 'Cookery,' which is the best, was written by Dr. Hill. Half the *trade*[1] know this." JOHNSON. "Well, sir. This shows how much better the subject of cookery may be treated by a philosopher. I doubt if the book be written by Dr. Hill; for, in Mrs. Glasse's 'Cookery,' which I have looked into, salt-petre and sal-prunella are spoken of as different substances, whereas sal-prunella is only salt-petre burnt on charcoal; and Hill could not be ignorant of this. However, as the greatest part of such a book is made by transcription, this mistake may have been carelessly adopted. But you shall see what a book of cookery I shall make: I shall agree with Mr. Dilly for the copy-right." MISS SEWARD. "That would be Hercules with the distaff indeed." JOHNSON. "No, madam. Women can spin very well; but they cannot make a good book of cookery."

JOHNSON. "O! Mr. Dilly—you must know that an English Benedictine monk[2] at Paris has translated 'The Duke of Berwick's Memoirs,' from the original French, and has sent them to me to sell. I offered them to Strahan, who sent them back with this answer;—'That the first book he had published was the Duke of Berwick's Life, by which he had lost: and he hated the name." Now I honestly tell you that Strahan has refused them; but I also honestly tell you that he did it upon no principle, for he never looked into them." DILLY. "Are they well translated, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, very well; in a style very current and clear. I have written to the Benedictine to give me an answer upon two points. What evidence is there that the letters are authentick? (for if they are not authentick, they are nothing). And how long will it be before the original French is published? For if the French edition is not to appear for a considerable time, the translation will be almost as valuable as an original book. They will make two volumes in octavo; and I have undertaken to correct every sheet as it comes from the press." Mr. Dilly desired to see them, and said he would send for them. He asked Dr. Johnson if he would write a preface to them. JOHNSON. "No, sir. The Benedictines were very kind to me, and I'll do what I undertook to do; but I will not mingle my name with them. I am to gain nothing by them. I'll turn them loose upon the world, and let them take their chance." DR. MAYO. "Pray, sir, are Ganganelli's letters authentick?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. Voltaire put the same question to the editor of them that I did to Macpherson—Where are the originals?"

Mrs. Knowles affected to complain that men had much more liberty allowed them than women. JOHNSON. "Why, madam, women have all the liberty they should wish to have. We have all the labour and the danger, and the women all the advantage. We go to sea, we build houses, we do every thing, in short, to pay our court to the women." MRS. KNOWLES. "The Doctor reasons very wittily, but not convincingly. Now, take the instance of building; the mason's wife, if she is ever seen in liquor, is ruined: the mason may get himself drunk as often as he pleases, with little loss of character; nay, may let his wife and children starve." JOHNSON. "Madam, you must consider, if the mason does get himself drunk, and let his wife and children starve, the parish will oblige him to find security for their maintenance. We have different modes of restraining evil. Stocks for the men, a ducking-stool for women, and a pound for beasts. If we require more perfection from women than from ourselves, it is doing them honour. And women have not the same temptations that we have; they may always live in virtuous company; men must mix in the world indiscriminately. If a woman has no inclination to do what is wrong, being secured from it is no restraint to her. I am at liberty to walk into the Thames; but if I were to try it, my friends would restrain me in Bedlam, and I should be obliged to them." MRS. KNOWLES. "Still, Doctor, I cannot help thinking it a hardship that more indulgence is allowed to men than to women. It gives a superiority to men, to which I do not see how they are entitled." JOHNSON. "It is plain, madam, one or other must have the superiority. As Shakspeare says, 'If two men ride on a horse, one must ride behind.'" DILLY. "I suppose, sir, Mrs. Knowles would have them ride in panniers, one on each side." JOHNSON. "Then, sir, the horse would throw them both." MRS. KNOWLES. "Well, I hope that in another world the sexes will be equal." BOSWELL. "That is being too ambitious, madam. *We* might as well desire to be equal with the angels. We shall all, I hope, be happy in a future state, but we must not expect to be all happy in the same degree. It is enough, if we be happy according to our several capacities. A worthy carman will get to heaven as well as Sir Isaac Newton. Yet, though equally good, they will

[1] As physicians are called *the faculty*, and counsellors at law *the profession*, the booksellers of London are denominated *the trade*. Johnson disapproved of these denominations.—BOSWELL.

[2] [The Abbé Hook. They were published, in 1779, by Cadell.—MACKINTOSH.]

not have the same degrees of happiness." JOHNSON. "Probably not[1]."

Upon this subject I had once before sounded him by mentioning the late Reverend Mr. Brown of Utrecht's image; that a great and small glass, though equally full, did not hold an equal quantity; which he threw out to refute David Hume's saying, that a little miss, going to dance at a ball, in a fine new dress, was as happy as a great orator, after having made an eloquent and applauded speech. After some thought, Johnson said, "I come over to the parson." As an instance of coincidence of thinking, Mr. Dilly told me, that Dr. King, a late dissenting minister in London, said to him, upon the happiness in a future state of good men of different capacities, "A pail does not hold so much as a tub; but, if it be equally full, it has no reason to complain. Every saint in heaven will have as much happiness as he can hold." Mr. Dilly thought this a clear, though a familiar, illustration of the phrase, "One star differeth from another in brightness." [1 Cor. xv. 41.]

Dr. Mayo having asked Johnson's opinion of Soame Jenyns's "View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion"—JOHNSON. "I think it a pretty book; not very theological indeed; and there seems to be an affectation of ease and carelessness, as if it were not suitable to his character to be very serious about the matter.' BOSWELL. "He may have intended this to introduce his book the better among genteel people, who might be unwilling to read too grave a treatise. There is a general levity in the age. We have physicians now with bag-wigs; may we not have airy divines, at least somewhat less solemn in their appearance than they used to be?" JOHNSON. "Jenyns might mean as you say." BOSWELL. "*You* should like his book, Mrs. Knowles, as it maintains, as you *friends* do, that courage is not a christian virtue." MRS. KNOWLES. "Yes, indeed, I like him there; but I cannot agree with him that friendship is not a christian virtue." JOHNSON. "Why, madam, strictly speaking, he is right. All friendship is preferring the interest of a friend, to the neglect, or, perhaps, against the interest, of others; so that an old Greek said, 'He that has *friends* has *no friend*[2].' Now Christianity recommends universal benevolence; to consider all men as our brethren; which is contrary to the virtue of friendship, as described by the ancient philosophers. Surely, madam, your sect must approve of this; for you call all men *friends*." MRS. KNOWLES. "We are commanded to do good to all men, 'but especially to them who are of the household of faith.'" JOHNSON. "Well, madam; the household of faith is wide enough." MRS. KNOWLES. "But, Doctor, our Saviour had twelve apostles, yet there was *one* whom he *loved*. John was called 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.'" JOHNSON (with eyes sparkling benignantly). "Very well, indeed, madam. You have said very well." BOSWELL. "A fine application. Pray, sir, had you ever thought of it?" JOHNSON. "I had not, sir."

From this pleasing subject, he, I know not how or why, made a sudden transition to one upon which he was a violent aggressor; for he said, "I am willing to love all mankind, *except an American;*" and his inflammable corruption bursting into horrid fire, he "breathed out threatenings and slaughter[3];" calling them "rascals, robbers, pirates;" and exclaiming, he 'd "burn and destroy them." Miss Seward, looking to him with mild but steady astonishment, said, "Sir, this is an instance that we are always most violent against those whom we have injured." He was irritated still more by this delicate and keen reproach; and roared out another tremendous volley, which one might fancy could be heard across the Atlantick. During this tempest I sat in great uneasiness, lamenting his heat of temper, till, by degrees, I diverted his attention to other topicks

DR. MAYO (to Dr. Johnson). "Pray, sir, have you read Edwards, of New England, on Grace?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." BOSWELL. "It puzzled me so much as to the freedom of the human will, by stating, with wonderful acute ingenuity, our being actuated by a series of motives which we cannot resist, that the only relief I had was to forget it." MAYO. "But he makes the proper distinction between moral and physical necessity." BOSWELL. "Alas! sir, they come both to the same thing. You may be bound as hard by chains when covered by leather, as when the iron appears. The argument for the moral necessity of human actions is always, I observe, fortified by supposing universal prescience to be one of the attributes of the Deity." JOHNSON. "You are surer that you are free, than you are of prescience; you are surer that you can lift up your finger or not

[1] See on this question Bishop Hall's Epistles, dec. iii. epist. 6. "Of the different degrees of heavenly glory, and of our mutual knowledge of each other above," and vol. ii. p. 7, where also this subject is discussed.—MALONE.

[2] [Οἱ φιλοι, ου φιλος, a phrase frequently quoted by Dr Johnson.—ED.]

[3] [What have Sir J. Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi ever related or characterized in such violent terms as Mr. Boswell here uses? violent, indeed, to the extent of being almost unintelligible. What means "his *inflammable corruption bursting into horrid fire*?"—ED.]

as you please, than you are of any conclusion from a deduction of reasoning. But let us consider a little the objection from prescience. It is certain I am either to go home to-night or not; that does not prevent my freedom." BOSWELL. "That it is certain you are *either* to go home or not, does not prevent your freedom: because the liberty of choice between the two is compatible with that certainty. But if *one* of these events be certain *now*, you have no *future* power of volition. If it be certain you are to go home to-night, you *must* go home." JOHNSON. "If I am well acquainted with a man, I can judge with great probability how he will act in any case, without his being restrained by my judging. God may have this probability increased to certainty[1]." BOSWELL. "When it is increased to *certainty*, freedom ceases, because that cannot be certainly foreknown which is not certain at the time; but if it be certain at the time, it is a contradiction in terms to maintain that there can be afterwards any *contingency* dependent upon the exercise of will or any thing else." JOHNSON. "All theory is against the freedom of the will; all experience for it." I did not push the subject any farther. I was glad to find him so mild in discussing a question of the most abstract nature, involved with theological tenets which he generally would not suffer to be in any degree opposed[2].

He, as usual, defended luxury: "You cannot spend money in luxury without doing good to the poor. Nay, you do more good to them by spending it in luxury; you make them exert industry, whereas by giving it you keep them idle I own, indeed, there may be more virtue in giving it immediately in charity, than in spending it in luxury; though there may be pride in that too." Miss Seward asked, if this was not Mandeville's doctrine of "private vices publick benefits." JOHNSON. "The fallacy of that book is, that Mandeville defines neither vices nor benefits. He reckons among vices every thing that gives pleasure. He takes the narrowest system of morality, monastick morality, which holds pleasure itself to be a vice, such as eating salt with our fish, because it makes it eat better, and he reckons wealth as a publick benefit, which is by no means always true. Pleasure of itself is not a vice. Having a garden, which we all know to be perfectly innocent, is a great pleasure. At the same time, in this state of being there are many pleasures vices, which however are so immediately agreeable that we can hardly abstain from them. The happiness of heaven will be, that pleasure and virtue will be perfectly consistent. Mandeville puts the case of a man who gets drunk at an alehouse, and says it is a public benefit, because so much money is got by it to the publick. But it must be considered, that all the good gained by this, through the gradation of alehouse-keeper, brewer, maltster, and farmer, is overbalanced by the evil caused to the man and his family by his getting drunk. This is the way to try what is vicious, by ascertaining whether more evil than good is produced by it upon the whole, which is the case in all vice. It may happen that good is produced by vice, but not as vice; for instance, a robber may take money from its owner, and give it to one who will make a better use of it. Here is good produced; but not by the robbery as robbery, but as translation of property. I read Mandeville forty or, I believe, fifty years ago[3]. He did not puzzle me; he opened my views into real life very much. No, it is clear that the happiness of society depends on virtue. In Sparta, theft was allowed by general consent; theft, therefore, was *there* not a crime, but then there was no security; and what a life must they have had, when there was no security! Without truth there must be a dissolution of society. As it is, there is so little truth, that we are almost afraid to trust to our ears; but how should we be, if falsehood were multiplied ten times! Society is held together by communication and information; and I remember this remark of Sir Thomas Brown's, 'Do the devils lie? No: for then hell could not subsist.'"

Talking of Miss ——[4], a literary lady, he said, "I was obliged to speak to Miss Reynolds, to let her know that I desired she would not flatter me so much." Somebody now observed, "She flatters Garrick."

[1] [This seems a very loose report. Dr. Johnson never could have talked of "GOD's having *probability* increased to *certainty*." To the Eternal and Infinite Creator there can be neither *probability* nor *futurity*. The action which is *future* to mortals is only a point of eternity in the eye of the ALMIGHTY, and it and all the motives that led to it are and were from all eternity *present* to HIM. Our bounded intellects cannot comprehend the *prescience* of the Deity; but if that attribute be conceded, there seems no difficulty in reconciling it with our own *free agency*; for God *has* already *seen* what man *will choose* to do.—ED.]

[2] If any of my readers are disturbed by this thorny question, I beg leave to recommend to them Letter 69 of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persannes*, and the late Mr. John Palmer of Islington's Answer to Dr. Priestley's mechanical arguments for what he absurdly calls "philosophical necessity."—BOSWELL.

[3] [See *ante* v. 1. p. 263.—ED.]

[4] [Hannah More.—*Malone MS.*—ED.]

JOHNSON. "She is in the right to flatter Garrick. She is in the right for two reasons; first, because she has the world with her, who have been praising Garrick these thirty years; and secondly, because she is rewarded for it by Garrick. Why should she flatter *me*? I can do nothing for her. Let her carry her praise to a better market." Then turning to Mrs. Knowles, "You, madam, have been flattering me all the evening; I wish you would give Boswell a little now. If you knew his merit as well as I do, you would say a great deal; he is the best travelling companion in the world."

Somebody mentioned the Reverend Mr. Mason's prosecution of Mr. Murray, the bookseller [1], for having inserted in a collection of "Gray's Poems" only fifty lines, of which Mr. Mason had still the exclusive property, under the statute of Queen Anne; and that Mr. Mason had persevered, notwithstanding his being requested to name his own terms of compensation [2]. Johnson signified his displeasure at Mr. Mason's conduct very strongly; but added, by way of showing that he was not surprised at it, "Mason's a whig." MRS. KNOWLES (not hearing distinctly). "What! a prig, sir?" JOHNSON. "Worse, madam; a whig! But he is both!"

I expressed a horrour at the thought of death. MRS. KNOWLES. "Nay, thou shouldst not have a horrour for what is the gate of life." JOHNSON (standing upon the hearth, rolling about, with a serious, solemn, and somewhat gloomy air). "No rational man can die without uneasy apprehension." MRS. KNOWLES. "The Scriptures tell us, 'The righteous shall have *hope* in his death.'" JOHNSON. "Yes, madam, that is, he shall not have despair. But, consider, his hope of salvation must be founded on the terms on which it is promised that the mediation of our Saviour shall be applied to us,—namely, obedience; and where obedience has failed, then, as suppletory to it, repentance. But what man can say that his obedience has been such, as he would approve of in another, or even in himself upon close examination, or that his repentance has not been such as to require being repented of? No man can be sure that his obedience and repentance will obtain salvation." MRS. KNOWLES. "But divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the soul." JOHNSON. "Madam, it may; but I should not think the better of a man who should tell me on his death-bed, he was sure of salvation. A man cannot be sure himself that he has a divine intimation of acceptance: much less can he make others sure that he has it." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, we must be contented to acknowledge that death is a terrible thing." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir. I have made no approaches to a state which can look on it as not terrible." MRS. KNOWLES (seeming to enjoy a pleasing serenity in the persuasion of benignant divine light). "Does not St. Paul say, 'I have fought the good fight of faith, I have finished my course; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of life?'" JOHNSON. "Yes, madam; but here was a man inspired, a man who had been converted by supernatural interposition." BOSWELL. "In prospect death is dreadful; but in fact we find that people die easy." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, most people have not *thought* much of the matter, so cannot *say* much, and it is supposed they die easy. Few believe it certain they are then to die; and those who do set themselves to behave with resolution [3], as a man does who is going to be hanged;—he is not the less unwilling to be hanged." MISS SEWARD. "There is one mode of the fear of death, which is certainly absurd; and that is the dread of annihilation, which is only a pleasing sleep without a dream." JOHNSON. "It is neither pleasing nor sleep; it is nothing. Now mere existence is so much better than nothing, that one would rather exist even in pain, than not exist." BOSWELL. "If annihilation be nothing, then existing in pain is not a comparative state, but is a positive evil, which I cannot think we should choose. I must be allowed to differ here, and it would lessen the hope of a future state founded on the argument, that the Supreme Being, who is good as he is great, will hereafter compensate for our present sufferings in this life. For if existence, such as we have it here, be comparatively a good, we have no reason to complain, though no more of it should be given to us. But if our only state of existence were in this world, then we might with some reason complain that we are so dissatisfied with our enjoyments compared with our desires." JOHNSON. "The lady confounds annihilation, which is nothing, with the apprehension of it, which is dreadful. It is in the apprehension of it that the horrour of annihilation consists."

Of John Wesley, he said, "He can talk well on any subject." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, what has he made of his story of a ghost?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he believes it; but not on sufficient authority He did not take time enough to examine the girl. It was at Newcastle where the ghost was said to have appeared to a young wo-

[1] [Mr. Murray was a spirited and intelligent bookseller, the father of the publisher of this work. -ED.]

[2] See "A letter to W. Mason, A. M. from J. Murray, bookseller in London," second edition, p 20 —BOSWELL.

[3] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 384, where Paoli assumes that they are thinking of something else.—F]

man several times, mentioning something about the right to an old house, advising application to be made to an attorney, which was done; and at the same time, saying the attorney would do nothing, which proved to be the fact. 'This,' says John, 'is a proof that a ghost knows our thoughts.' Now," laughing, "it is not necessary to know our thoughts, to tell that an attorney will sometimes do nothing. Charles Wesley, who is a more stationary man, does not believe the story. I am sorry that John did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it." MISS SEWARD (with an incredulous smile). "What, sir! about a ghost!" JOHNSON (with solemn vehemence). "Yes, madam; this is a question which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding."

Mrs. Knowles mentioned, as a proselyte to Quakerism, Miss —— ——[1], a young lady well known to Dr. Johnson, for whom he had shown much affection; while she ever had, and still retained, a great respect for him. Mrs. Knowles at the same time took an opportunity of letting him know "that the amiable young creature was sorry at finding that he was offended at her leaving the church of England, and embracing a simpler faith;" and, in the gentlest and most persuasive manner, solicited his kind indulgence for what was sincerely a matter of conscience. JOHNSON (frowning very angrily). "Madam, she is an odious wench. She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which is the most important of all subjects, and should be studied with all care, and with all the helps we can get. She knew no more of the church which she left, and that which she embraced, than she did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaick systems." MRS. KNOWLES. "She had the New Testament before her." JOHNSON. "Madam, she could not understand the New Testament, the most difficult book in the world, for which the study of a life is required." MRS. KONWLES. "It is clear as to essentials" JOHNSON. "But not as to controversial points. The heathens were easily converted, because they had nothing to give up; but we ought not, without very strong conviction indeed, to desert the religion in which we have been educated. That is the religion given you, the religion in which it may be said Providence has placed you. If you live conscientiously in that religion, you may be safe. But errour is dangerous indeed, if you err when you choose a religion for yourself." MRS. KNOWLES. "Must we then go by implicit faith?" JOHNSON. "Why, madam, the greatest part of our knowledge is implicit faith; and as to religion, have we heard all that a disciple of Confucius, all that a Mahometan, can say for himself?" He then rose again into passion, and attacked the young proselyte in the severest terms of reproach, so that both the ladies seemed to be much shocked.[2]

[1] [Jane Harry She was the illegitimate daughter, by a mulatto woman, of what Miss Seward calls (*Lett.* 1. 97) a *planter in the East* Indies, but in truth of a West Indian, who sent her over o England for her education. At the friend's nouse where she resided, Mrs. Knowles was a frequent visiter; and by degrees she converted this inexperienced and probably not very wise young creature to Quakerism. Miss Seward, with more than her usual inaccuracy, has made a romantic history of this lady; and, amongst other fables, states that she sacrificed a fortune of 100,000*l.* by her conscientious conversion. Mr. Markland has been so kind as to put into the editor's hands evidence from a highly respectable member of the father's family, which proves that Jane Harry's fortune was but 1000*l.*; and so little was her father displeased at her conversion, that he rather approved of it, and gave her 1000*l.* more. So vanishes another of Miss Seward's romances.—ED.]

[2] Mrs. Knowles, not satisfied with the fame of her needle-work, the "*sutile pictures*" mentioned by Johnson, in which she has indeed displayed much dexterity, nay, with the fame of reasoning better than women generally do, as I have fairly shown her to have done, communicated to me a dialogue of considerable length, which, after many years had elapsed, she wrote down as having passed between Dr. Johnson and her at this interview. As I had not the least recollection of it, and did not find the smallest trace of it in my "record" taken at the time, I could not, in consistency with my firm regard to authenticity, insert it in my work. It has, however, been published in "The Gentleman's Magazine" for June, 1791 [v. lxi. p. 500]. It chiefly relates to the principles of the sect called Quakers; and no doubt the lady appears to have greatly the advantage of Dr. Johnson in argument, as well as expression. From what I have now stated, and from the internal evidence of the paper itself, any one who may have the curiosity to peruse it will judge whether it was wrong in me to reject it, however willing to gratify Mrs. Knowles.—BOSWELL. [Mrs. Knowles, to her own account of this conversation was desirous of adding Miss Seward's testimony; and Miss Seward, who had by this time become exceedingly hostile to Johnson's memory, and was a great admirer of Mrs. Knowles, was not unwilling to gratify her. She accordingly communicated to Mrs. Knowles her notes of the conversation (*Lett.* 6. 97), which, it may be fairly presumed, were not too partial to Johnson. But they nevertheless did not satisfy the fair disputant, who, as Miss Seward complains (*Lett.* 2. 179), was "curiously dissatisfied with them, because they did not contain all that had passed, and as *exhibiting her in a poor eclipsed*

We remained together till it was pretty late. Notwithstanding occasional explosions of violence, we were all delighted upon the whole with Johnson. I compared him at this time to a warm West Indian climate, where you have a bright sun, quick vegetation, luxuriant foliage, luscious fruits; but where the same heat sometimes produces thunder, lightning, and earthquakes in a terrible degree.

April 17, being Good-Friday, I waited on Johnson, as usual. I observed at breakfast that although it was a part of his abstemious discipline, on this most solemn fast, to take no milk in his tea, yet when Mrs. Desmoulins inadvertently poured it in, he did not reject it. I talked of the strange indecision of mind, and imbecility in the common occurrences of life, which we may observe in some people. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I am in the habit of getting others to do things for me." BOSWELL. "What, sir! have you that weakness?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir. But I always think afterwards I should have done better for myself."

I told him that at a gentleman's house where there was thought to be such extravagance or bad management, that he was living much beyond his income, his lady[1] had objected to the cutting of a pickled mango, and that I had taken an opportunity to ask the price of it, and found it was only two shillings; so here was a very poor saving. JOHNSON. "Sir, that is the blundering economy of a narrow understanding. It is stopping one hole in a sieve."

I expressed some inclination to publish an account of my travels upon the continent of Europe, for which I had a variety of materials collected. JOHNSON. "I do not say, sir, you may not publish your travels; but I give you my opinion, that you would lessen yourself by it. What can you tell of countries so well known as those upon the continent of Europe, which you have visited?" BOSWELL. "But I can give an entertaining narrative, with many incidents, anecdotes, *jeux d'esprit*, and remarks, so as to make very pleasant reading." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, most modern travellers in Europe who have published their travels have been laughed at: I would not have you added to the number[2]. The world is now not contented to be merely entertained by a traveller's narrative; they want to learn something. Now some of my friends asked me, why I did not give some account of my travels in France. The reason is plain; intelligent readers had seen more of France than I had. *You* might have liked my travels in France, and THE CLUB might have liked them; but, upon the whole, there would have been more ridicule than good produced by them." BOSWELL. "I cannot agree with you, sir. People would like to read what you say of any thing. Suppose a face has been painted by fifty painters before; still we love to

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light;" and it is amusing to observe, that—except on the words "*odious wench*" at the outset, in which all three accounts agree, and the words "*I never desire to meet fools anywhere*," with which the ladies agree that the conversation ended—there is little accordance between them. Had they been content to say that the violence of Johnson was a disagreeable contrast to the quiet reasoning of the fair Quaker, they would probably have said no more than the truth; but when they affect to give the precise dialogue in the *very words* of the speakers, and yet do not agree in almost any one expression or sentiment—when neither preserve a word of what Mr. Boswell reports—and when both (but particularly Mrs. Knowles) attribute to Johnson the poorest and feeblest trash—we may be forgiven for rejecting both as fabulous, and the rather because Mr. Boswell's note was written on the instant ("his custom ever in the afternoon"), while those of the ladies seem to have been made up many years after the event. It may however be suspected that Boswell was himself a little ashamed of Johnson's violence, for he evidently slurs over the latter part of the conversation. But in the Doctor's behalf it should be recollected that he had taken a great and affectionate interest in this young creature, who had, as he feared, not only endangered her spiritual welfare, but offended her friends, and forfeited her fortune; and that he was forced into the discussion by the very person by whose unauthorized and underhand interference so much mischief (as he considered it) had been done.—Long as this note is, it must be added, that it appears in another part of Miss Seward's correspondence (vol. ii. p. 383), that when a young Quaker lady married a member of the church of England, Mrs. Knowles did not hesitate to designate *her* as *an* APOSTATE, although she had not quitted her sect, but only married one who did not belong to it.—ED.]

[1] [We learn from Miss Hawkins (*Mem.* ii. 282), what might have been guessed from several other passages, that the gentleman and lady here alluded to were Mr. Langton and Lady Rothes. She goes on to say, that "the anecdote not having a shadow of truth in it but the presence of the mango at table, Lady Rothes, who knew the slander to be aimed at herself, asked Boswell how he could put together such a falsity. He replied, affecting the tone of Johnson, 'Why, madam, it is no more than is done by landscape painters: the landscape is from nature, and they put a tree in the foreground as an embellishment.'" As Miss Hawkins could have heard Boswell's confession only at *second-hand*, we may, without questioning *her* veracity, be permitted to disbelieve it altogether. Boswell never could have made any such admission.—ED.]

[2] I believe, however, I shall follow my own opinion; for the world has shown a very flattering partiality to my writings, on many occasions.—BOSWELL.

see it done by Sir Joshua." JOHNSON. "True, sir; but Sir Joshua cannot paint a face when he has not time to look on it." BOSWELL. "Sir, a sketch of any sort by him is valuable. And, sir, to talk to you in your own style (raising my voice, and shaking my head), you *should* have given us your travels in France. I am *sure* I am right, and *there 's an end on 't.*"

I said to him that it was certainly true, as my friend Dempster had observed in his letter to me upon the subject, that a great part of what was in his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland" had been in his mind before he left London. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, the topicks were; and books of travels will be good in proportion to what a man has previously in his mind; his knowing what to observe; his power of contrasting one mode of life with another. As the Spanish proverb says, 'He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry the wealth of the Indies with him.' So it is in travelling; a man must carry knowledge with him, if he would bring home knowledge." BOSWELL. "The proverb, I suppose, sir, means, he must carry a large stock with him to trade with." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir."

It was a delightful day; as we walked to St. Clement's church, I again remarked that Fleet-street was the most cheerful scene in the world. "Fleet-street," said I, "is in my mind more delightful than Tempé." JOHNSON. "Ay, sir, but let it be compared with Mull!"

There was a very numerous congregation to-day at St. Clement's church, which Dr. Johnson said he observed with pleasure.

And now I am to give a pretty full account of one of the most curious incidents in Johnson's life, of which he himself has made the following minute on this day:

"In my return from church, I was accosted by Edwards[1], an old fellow-collegian, who had not seen me since 1729[2]. He knew me, and asked if I remembered one Edwards; I did not at first recollect the name, but gradually, as we walked along, recovered it, and told him a conversation that had passed at an alehouse between us. My purpose is to continue our acquaintance."

It was in Butcher-row that this meeting happened. Mr. Edwards, who was a decent-looking, elderly man, in gray clothes, and a wig of many curls, accosted Johnson with familiar confidence, knowing who he was, while Johnson returned his salutation with a courteous formality, as to a stranger. But as soon as Edwards had brought to his recollection their having been at Pembroke College together nine-and-forty years ago he seemed much pleased, asked where he lived, and said he should be glad to see him in Bolt-court. EDWARDS. "Ah, sir! we are old men now." JOHNSON (who never liked to think of being old). "Don't let us discourage one another." EDWARDS. "Why, Doctor, you look stout and hearty. I am happy to see you so; for the newspapers told us you were very ill." JOHNSON. "Ay, sir, they are always telling lies of *us old fellows.*"

Wishing to be present at more of so singular a conversation as that between two fellow-collegians, who had lived forty years in London without ever having chanced to meet, I whispered to Mr. Edwards that Dr. Johnson was going home, and that he had better accompany him now. So Edwards walked along with us, I eagerly assisting to keep up the conversation. Mr. Edwards informed Dr. Johnson that he had practised long as a solicitor in Chancery, but that he now lived in the country upon a little farm, about sixty acres, just by Stevenage, in Hertfordshire, and that he came to London (to Barnard's Inn, No. 6) generally twice a week. Johnson appearing to be in a reverie, Mr. Edwards addressed himself to me, and expatiated on the pleasure of living in the country. BOSWELL. "I have no notion of this, sir. What you have to entertain you is, I think, exhausted in half an hour." EDWARDS. "What! don't you love to have hope realised? I see my grass, and my corn, and my trees growing. Now, for instance, I am curious to see if this frost has not nipped my fruit trees." JOHNSON (who we did not imagine was attending). "You find, sir, you have fears as well as hopes." So well did he see the whole, when another saw but the half of a subject[3].

When we got to Dr. Johnson's house, and were seated in his library, the dialogue went on admirably. EDWARDS. "Sir, I remember you would not let us say *prodigious* at college. For even then, sir (turning to me), he was delicate in language, and we all feared him[4]." JOHNSON (to Edwards). "From your having practised

[1] [Oliver Edwards entered at Pembroke College only in June, 1729, so that he and Johnson could not have been long acquainted.—HALL.]

[2] [This deliberate assertion of Johnson, that he had not seen Edwards since 1729, is a confirmation of the opinion derived by Dr. Hall from the dates in the college books, that Johnson did not return to Pembroke College after Christmas, 1729—an important fact in his early history. See *ante*, vol i. p. 27, *n.*—ED.]

[3] [Nay, not so. The question raised was the want of *interest* in a country life; and the *fear* was, therefcre, as good as the *hope*.—ED.]

[4] Johnson said to me afterwards, "Sir, they respected me for my literature; and yet it was not great but by comparison. Sir, it is amazing

the law long, sir, I presume you must be rich." EDWARDS. "No, sir; I got a good deal of money; but I had a number of poor relations to whom I gave a great part of it." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have been rich in the most valuable sense of the word." EDWARDS. "But I shall not die rich." JOHNSON. "Nay, sure, sir, it is better to *live* rich than to *die* rich." EDWARDS. "I wish I had continued at college." JOHNSON. "Why do you wish that, sir?" EDWARDS. "Because I think I should have had a much easier life than mine has been. I should have been a parson, and had a good living, like Bloxam[1] and several others, and lived comfortably." JOHNSON. "Sir, the life of a parson, of a conscientious clergyman, is not easy. I have always considered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. I would rather have Chancery suits upon my hands than the cure of souls. No, sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life as an easy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an easy life." Here taking himself up all of a sudden, he exclaimed, "O! Mr. Edwards, I'll convince you that I recollect you. Do you remember our drinking together at an alehouse near Pembroke-gate? At that time, you told me of the Eton boy, who, when verses on our Saviour's turning water into wine were prescribed as an exercise, brought up a single line, which was highly admired:

'Vidit et erubuit lympha pudica Deum[2];'

and I told you of another fine line in 'Camden's Remains;' an eulogy upon one of our kings, who was succeeded by his son, a prince of equal merit:

'Mira cano, Sol occubuit, nox nulla secuta est.'"

EDWARDS. "You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson. I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher; but, I do n't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in." Mr. Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Courtenay, Mr. Malone, and, indeed, all the eminent men to whom I have mentioned this, have thought it an exquisite trait of character. The truth is, that philosophy, like religion, is too generally supposed to be hard and severe, at least so grave as to exclude all gaiety.

EDWARDS. "I have been twice married, Doctor. You, I suppose, have never known what it was to have a wife." JOHNSON. "Sir, I have known what it was to have a wife, and (in a solemn, tender, faltering tone) I have known what it was to *lose a wife*. It had almost broke my heart."

EDWARDS. "How do you live, sir? For my part, I must have my regular meals, and a glass of good wine. I find I require it." JOHNSON. "I now drink no wine, sir. Early in life I drank wine; for many years I drank none. I then for some years drank a great deal." EDWARDS. "Some hogsheads, I warrant you." JOHNSON. "I then had a severe illness, and left it off, and I have never begun it again. I never felt any difference upon myself from eating one thing rather than another, nor from one kind of weather rather than another. There are people, I believe, who feel a difference; but I am not one of them. And as to regular meals, I have fasted from the Sunday's dinner to the Tuesday's dinner without any inconvenience. I believe it is best to eat just as one is hungry: but a man who is in business, or a man who has a family, must have stated meals. I am a straggler. I may leave this town and go to Grand Cairo, without being missed here, or observed there." EDWARDS. "Do n't you eat supper, sir?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." EDWARDS. "For my part, now, I consider supper as a turnpike through which one must pass in order to get to bed[3]."

JOHNSON. "You are a lawyer, Mr. Edwards. Lawyers know life practically. A bookish man should always have them to converse with. They have what he wants." EDWARDS. "I am grown old: I am sixty-five." JOHNSON. "I shall be sixty-eight next birth-day. Come, sir, drink water, and put in for a hundred."

Mr. Edwards mentioned a gentleman[4] who had left his whole fortune to Pembroke College. JOHNSON. "Whether to leave

how little literature there is in the world."—BOSWELL.

[1] [Matthew Bloxam entered at Pembroke College, March 25, 1729; M. A., July, 1735.—HALL.]

[2] This line has frequently been attributed to Dryden, when a King's scholar at Westminster. But neither Eton nor Westminster have in truth any claim to it, the line being borrowed, with a slight change (as Mr. Bindley has observed to me), from an epigram by Richard Crashaw, which was published in his "Epigrammata Sacra," first printed at Cambridge, without the authour's name, in 1634, 8vo. The original is much more elegant than the copy, the water being personified, and the word on which the point of the epigram turns, being reserved to the close of the line:

"JOANN. 2.
Aquæ in vinum versæ.
Unde rubor vestris et non sua purpura lymphis?
Quæ rosa mirantes tam nova mutat aquas?
Numen, conviva, præsens agnoscite numen,
Nympha pudica DEUM vidit, et *erubuit*."—MALONE.

[3] I am not absolutely sure but this was my own suggestion, though it is truly in the character of Edwards.—BOSWELL.

[4] [This must have been the Rev. James Phipps who had been a scholar of Pembroke, and who in 1773, left his estates to the college to purchase livings for a particular foundation, and for other purposes.—HALL.]

one's whole fortune to a college be right, must depend upon circumstances. I would leave the interest of the fortune I bequeathed to a college to my relations or my friends, for their lives. It is the same thing to a college, which is a permanent society, whether it gets the money now or twenty years hence; and I would wish to make my relations or friends feel the benefit of it."

This interview confirmed my opinion of Johnson's most humane and benevolent heart. His cordial and placid behaviour to an old fellow collegian, a man so different from himself; and his telling him that he would go down to his farm and visit him, showed a kindness of disposition very rare at an advanced age. He observed, "how wonderful it was that they had both been in London forty years, without having ever once met, and both walkers in the street too!" Mr. Edwards, when going away, again recurred to his consciousness of senility, and, looking full in Johnson's face, said to him, "You 'll find in Dr. Young,

'O my coevals! remnants of yourselves.'"

Johnson did not relish this at all; but shook his head with impatience. Edwards walked off seemingly highly pleased with the honour of having been thus noticed by Dr. Johnson. When he was gone, I said to Johnson, I thought him but a weak man. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir. Here is a man who has passed through life without experience: yet I would rather have him with me than a more sensible man who will not talk readily. This man is always willing to say what he has to say." Yet Dr. Johnson had himself by no means that willingness which he praised so much, and I think so justly: for who has not felt the painful effect of the dreary void, when there is a total silence in a company, for any length of time; or, which is as bad, or perhaps worse, when the conversation is with difficulty kept up by a perpetual effort?

Johnson once observed to me, "Tom Tyers described me the best: 'Sir,' said he, 'you are like a ghost: you never speak till you are spoken to[1].'"

Mr. Edwards had said to me aside, that Dr. Johnson should have been of a profession. I repeated the remark to Johnson, that I might have his own thoughts on the subject. JOHNSON. "Sir, it *would* have been better that I had been of a profession. ought to have been a lawyer." BOSWELL. "I do not think, sir, it would have been better, for we should not have had the English Dictionary." JOHNSON. "But you would have had Reports." BOSWELL. 'Ay; but there would not have been another who could have written the Dictionary. There have been many very good judges. Suppose you had been lord chancellor; you would have delivered opinions with more extent of mind, and in a more ornamented manner, than perhaps any chancellor ever did, or ever will do. But, I believe, causes have been as judiciously decided as you could have done." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir Property has been as well settled."

Johnson, however, had a noble ambition floating in his mind, and had, undoubtedly, often speculated on the possibility of his supereminent powers being rewarded in this great and liberal country by the highest honours of the state. Sir William Scott informs me, that upon the death of the late Lord Lichfield, who was chancellor of the University of Oxford, he said to Johnson, "What a pity it is, sir, that you did not follow the profession of the law! You might have been lord chancellor of Great Britain, and attained to the dignity of the peerage; and now that the title of Lichfield, your native city, is extinct, you might have had it." Johnson, upon this, seemed much agitated; and, in an angry tone, exclaimed, "Why will you vex me by suggesting this, when it is too late?"

But he did not repine at the prosperity of others. The late Dr. Thomas Leland told Mr. Courtenay that when Mr. Edmund Burke showed Johnson his fine house and lands near Beaconsfield, Johnson coolly said, "*Non equidem invideo; miror magis*[2]."

[1] [Here followed the account of Mr. Tyers, now transferred to v. i. p. 136.—ED.]

[2] I am not entirely without suspicion that Johnson may have felt a little momentary envy; for no man loved the good things of this life better than he did; and he could not but be conscious that he deserved a much larger share of them than he ever had. I attempted in a newspaper to comment on the above passage in the manner of Warburton, who must be allowed to have shown uncommon ingenuity, in giving to any authour's text whatever meaning he chose it should carry. As this imitation may amuse my readers, I shall here introduce it: "No saying of DR. JOHNSON's has been more misunderstood than his applying to MR. BURKE when he first saw him at his fine place at Beaconsfield, *Non equidem invideo; miror magis*. These two celebrated men had been friends for many years before Mr. Burke entered on his parliamentary career. They were both writers, both members of THE LITERARY CLUB; when, therefore, Dr. Johnson saw Mr Burke in a situation so much more splendid than that to which he himself had attained, he did not mean to express that he thought it a disproportionate prosperity; but while he, as a philosopher, asserted an exemption from envy, *non equidem invideo*, he went on in the words of the poet, *miror magis;* thereby signifying, either that he was occupied in admiring what he was glad to see, or, perhaps, that, considering the general lot of men of superiour abilities, he

Yet no man had a higher notion of the dignity of literature than Johnson, or was more determined in maintaining the respect which he justly considered as due to it. Of this, besides the general tenor of his conduct in society, some characteristical instances may be mentioned.

He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that once when he dined in a numerous company of booksellers, where the room, being small, the head of the table, at which he sat, was almost close to the fire, he persevered in suffering a great deal of inconvenience from the heat, rather than quit his place, and let one of them sit above him.

Goldsmith, in his diverting simplicity, complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. "I met him," said he, "at Lord Clare's[1] house in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." The company having laughed heartily, Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, gentlemen," said he, "Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him"

Nor could he patiently endure to hear, that such respect as he thought due only to higher intellectual qualities should be bestowed on men of slighter, though perhaps more amusing, talents. I told him, that one morning, when I went to breakfast with Garrick, who was very vain of his intimacy with Lord Camden, he accosted me thus: "Pray now, did you—did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh?" "No, sir," said I "Pray what do you mean by the question?" "Why," replied Garrick, with an affected indifference, yet, as if standing on tip-toe, "Lord Camden has this moment left me. We have had a long walk together." JOHNSON. "Well, sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden *was* a *little lawyer* to be associating so familiarly with a player."

Sir Joshua Reynolds observed, with great truth, that Johnson considered Garrick to be as it were his *property*. He would allow no man either to blame or to praise Garrick in his presence, without contradicting him[2].

Having fallen into a very serious frame of mind, in which mutual expressions of kindness passed between us, such as would be thought too vain in me to repeat, I talked with regret of the sad inevitable certainty that one of us must survive the other. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, that is an affecting consideration. I remember Swift, in one of his letters to Pope, says, 'I intend to come over, that we may meet once more; and when we must part, it is what happens to all human beings.'" BOSWELL. "The hope that we shall see our departed friends again must support the mind." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir[3]." BOSWELL "There is a strange unwillingness to part with life, independent of serious fears as to futurity. A reverend friend of ours[4] (naming him) tells me, that he feels an uneasiness at the thoughts of leaving his house, his study, his books." JOHNSON. "This is foolish in *****. A man need not be uneasy on these grounds: for, as he will retain his consciousness, he may say with the philosopher, *Omnia mea mecum porto.*" BOSWELL. "True, sir: we may carry our books in our heads; but still there is something painful in the thought of leaving for ever what has given us pleasure. I remember, many years ago, when my imagination was warm, and I happened to be in a melancholy mood, it distressed me to think of going into a state of being in which Shakspeare's poetry did not exist. A lady, who I then much admired, a very amiable woman, humoured my fancy, and relieved me by saying, 'The first thing you will meet with in the other world will be an elegant copy of Shakspeare's works presented to you.'" Dr. Johnson smiled[5] benignantly at this, and did not appear to disapprove of the notion.

[Knowing the state of Dr. Johnson's nerves, and how easily they were affected, Mrs. Piozzi forbore reading in a new magazine, one day, the death of a Samuel Johnson who expired that month; but he, snatching up the book, saw it himself, and, contrary to her expectation, only said, "Oh! I hope death will now be glutted with Sam Johnsons, and let me alone for some time to come: I read of another namesake's departure last week."] Piozzi. p. 144.

We went to St. Clement's church again

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wondered that Fortune, who is represented as blind, should, in this instance, have been so just." —BOSWELL.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 273, *n*.—ED.]

[2] [Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote two dialogues, in illustration of this position, in the first of which Johnson *attacks* Garrick in opposition to Sir Joshua, and in the other *defends* him against Gibbon. They were originally published in a periodical work, but are preserved in Miss Hawkins's *Memoirs*, v. ii. p. 110. Lord Farnborough has obligingly communicated to the Editor the evidence of the late Sir George Beaumont (who had received copies of them from Sir Joshua himself), both of their authenticity and of their correct imitation of Johnson's style of conversation, and the Editor has therefore given them a place in the Appendix.—ED.]

[3] See on the same subject, vol. i. p. 287.—MALONE.

[4] [Dr. Percy.—ED.]

[5] [Dr. Johnson might well smile at such a *distress* of mind, and at the argument by which it was *relieved*.—ED.]

n the afternoon, and then returned and drank tea and coffee in Mrs. Williams's room; Mrs. Desmoulins doing the honours of the tea-table. I observed that he would not even look at a proof-sheet of his "Life of Waller" on Good-Friday.

Mr. Allen, the printer, brought a book on agriculture, which was printed, and was soon to be published[1]. It was a very strange performance, the authour having mixed in it his own thoughts upon various topicks, along with his remarks on ploughing, sowing, and other farming operations. He seemed to be an absurd profane fellow, and had introduced in his books many sneers at religion, with equal ignorance and conceit. Dr. Johnson permitted me to read some passages aloud. One was that he resolved to work on Sunday, and did work, but he owned he felt *some* weak compunction; and he had this very curious reflection: "I was born in the wilds of Christianity, and the briers and thorns still hang about me." Dr. Johnson could not help laughing at this ridiculous image, yet was very angry at the fellow's impiety. "However," said he, "the reviewers will make him hang himself." He, however, observed, "that formerly there might have been a dispensation obtained for working on Sunday in the time of harvest." Indeed in ritual observances, were all the ministers of religion what they should be, and what many of them are, such a power might be wisely and safely lodged with the church.

On Saturday, 18th April, I drank tea with him. He praised the late Mr. Duncombe[2], of Canterbury, as a pleasing man. "He used to come to me; I did not seek much after *him*. Indeed I never sought much after any body." BOSWELL. "Lord Orrery, I suppose." JOHNSON. "No, sir; I never went to him but when he sent for me." BOSWELL. "Richardson?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir: but I sought after George Psalmanazar the most. I used to go and sit with him at an ale-house in the city."

Piozzi, p. 134, 135.

[When Mrs. Piozzi asked Dr. Johnson who was the *best* man he had ever known? "Psalmanazar" was the unexpected reply. He said, likewise, "that though a native of France, as his friend imagined, he possessed more of the English language than any other foreigner who had fallen in his way." Though there was much esteem, however, there was I believe but little confidence between them; they conversed merely about general topics, religion and learning, of which both were undoubtedly stupendous examples; and with regard to true Christian perfection, have heard Johnson say, "That Georg Psalmanazar's piety, penitence, and virtue, exceeded almost what we read as wonderful even in the lives of saints."

This extraordinary person lived and died at a house in Old-street, where Dr. Johnson was witness to his talents and virtues, and to his final preference of the church of England, after having studied, disgraced, and adorned so many modes of worship. The name he went by was not supposed by his friend to be that of his family; but all inquiries were vain; his reasons for concealing his original were penitentiary; he deserved no other name than that of the Impostor, he said. That portion of the Universal History which was written by him does not seem to me to be composed with peculiar spirit; but all traces of the wit and the wanderer were probably worn out before he undertook the work. His pious and patient endurance of a tedious illness, ending in an exemplary death, confirmed the strong impression his merit had made upon the mind of Dr. Johnson.]

Hawk Apoph. p. 206.

He had never, he said, seen the close of the life of any one that he wished so much his own to resemble, as that of Psalmanazar, for its purity and devotion. He told many anecdotes of him; and said, he was supposed, by his accent, to have been a Gascon; but that he spoke English with the city accent, and coarse enough. He for some years spent his evenings at a publick-house near Old-street, where many persons went to talk with him. When Dr. Johnson was asked whether he ever contradicted Psalmanazar; "I should as soon," said, "have thought of contradicting a bishop:" so high did he hold his character in the latter part of his life. When he was asked whether he ever mentioned Formosa before him, he said, "he was afraid to mention even China."]

I am happy to mention another instance which I discovered of his *seeking after* a man of merit. Soon after the Honourable Daines Barrington had published his ex ellent "Observations on the Statutes[3]," Johnson waited on that worthy and learned gentleman; and, having told him his name, courteously said, "I have read your book, sir, with great pleasure, and wish to be better known to you." Thus began an acquaintance, which was continued with mutual regard as long as Johnson lived.

Talking of a recent seditious delinquent[4],

[1] [Marshall's "Minutes of Agriculture."—ED.]

[2] [William Duncombe, Esq. He married the sister of John Hughes, the poet; was the authour of two tragedies, and other ingenious productions; and died 26th Feb. 1769, aged 79.—MALONE.

[3] 4to. 1766. The worthy authour died many years after Johnson, March 13, 1800, aged about 74.—MALONE.

[4] [Mr. Horne Tooke, who had been in the preceding July convicted of a seditious libel. The

he said, "They should set him in the pillory, that he may be punished in a way that would disgrace him." I observed, that the pillory does not always disgrace. And I mentioned an instance of a gentleman[1], who I thought was not dishonoured by it. JOHNSON. "Ay, but he was, sir. He could not mouth and strut as he used to do, after having been there. People are not willing to ask a man to their tables who has stood in the pillory."

The gentleman who had dined with us at Dr. Percy's[2] came in. Johnson attacked the Americans with intemperate vehemence of abuse. I said something in their favour; and added, that I was always sorry when he talked on that subject. This, it seems, exasperated him; though he said nothing at the time. The cloud was charged with sulphureous vapour, which was afterwards to burst in thunder. We talked of a gentleman[3] who was running out his fortune in London; and I said, "We must get him out of it. All his friends must quarrel with him, and that will soon drive him away." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, we 'll send *you* to him. If your company does not drive a man out of his house, nothing will." This was a horrible shock, for which there was no visible cause. I afterwards asked him why he had said so harsh a thing. JOHNSON. "Because, sir, you made me angry about the Americans." BOSWELL. "But why did you not take your revenge directly?" JOHNSON (smiling). "Because, sir, I had nothing ready. A man cannot strike till he has his weapons." This was a candid and pleasant confession.

He showed me to-night his drawing-room, very genteelly fitted up, and said, Mrs. Thrale sneered when I talked of my having asked you and your lady to live at my house. I was obliged to tell her that you would be in as respectable a situation in my house as in her's. "Sir, the insolence of wealth will creep out." BOSWELL. "She has a little both of the insolence of wealth and the conceit of parts." JOHNSON. "The insolence of wealth is a wretched thing; but the conceit of parts has some foundation. To be sure, it should not be But who is without it?" BOSWELL. "Yourself, sir." JOHNSON. "Why, I play no tricks: I lay no traps." BOSWELL. "No, sir. You are six feet high, and you only do not stoop."

We talked of the numbers of people that sometimes have composed the household of great families. I mentioned that there were a hundred in the family of the present Earl of Eglintoune's father. Dr. Johnson seeming to doubt it, I began to enumerate; "Let us see, my lord and my lady, two." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, if you are to count by twos, you may be long enough." BOSWELL. "Well, but now I add two sons and seven daughters, and a servant for each, that will make twenty; so we have the fifth part already." JOHNSON. "Very true. You get at twenty pretty readily; but you will not so easily get further on. We grow to five feet pretty readily; but it is not so easy to grow to seven."

[Yesterday (18th) I rose late, having not slept ill. Having promised a dedication, I thought it necessary[4] to write; but for some time neither wrote nor read. Langton came in and talked. After dinner I wrote. At tea Boswell came in. He staid till near twelve.] Prayers & Med. p. 163.

On Sunday, 19th April, being Easter-day, after the solemnities of the festival in St. Paul's church, I visited him, but could not stay to dinner. I expressed a wish to have the arguments for Christianity always in readiness, that my religious faith might be as firm and clear as any proposition whatever; so that I need not be under the least uneasiness when it should be attacked. JOHNSON. "Sir, you cannot answer all objections. You have demonstration for a first cause: you see he must be good as well as powerful, because there is nothing to make him otherwise, and goodness of itself is preferable. Yet you have against this, what is very certain, the unhappiness of human life. This, however, gives us reason to hope for a future state of compensation, that there may be a perfect system. But of that we were not sure till we had a positive revelation." I told him that his "Rasselas" had often made me unhappy; for it represented the misery of human life so well.

sentence—pronounced in November, 1777—was a year's imprisonment, and 200*l.* fine; but it seems strange that Johnson should, in April, 1778, have spoken *conjecturally* of a sentence passed six months before. Perhaps the conversation occurred at Ashbourn in the preceding autumn, when the sentence was a subject of much conjecture and curiosity, and that, by some mistake in arranging his notes, Mr. Boswell has misplaced it here.—ED.]

[1] [Probably Dr. Shebbeare. It was Shebbeare's exposure which suggested the witty allusion of the *Heroick Epistle*,

'Does envy doubt? Witness, ye chosen train,
Who breathe the sweets of his Saturnian reign;
Witness, ye Hills, ye Johnsons, Scotts, Shebbeares
Hark to my call, *for some of you have ears!*"

But his ears were not endangered; indeed he was so favourably treated, being allowed to stand *on*, and not *in*, the pillory, and to have certain other indulgencies, that the sheriff was afterwards prosecuted for partiality towards him.—ED.]

[2] See p. 162, of this volume.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Mr. Langton.—ED.]

[4] [He means that if it had not been in performance of a *promise*, he would not have done any worldly business on Easter eve. What the dedication was does not appear.—ED.]

and so convincingly to a thinking mind, that if at any time the impression wore off, and I felt myself easy, I began to suspect some delusion.

[In reviewing my time from Easter, 1777, I found a very melancholy and shameful blank. So little has been done, that days and months are without any trace. My health has, indeed, been very much interrupted. My nights have been commonly, not only restless, but painful and fatiguing. My respiration was once so difficult, that an asthma was suspected. I could not walk, but with great difficulty, from Stowhill to Greenhill. Some relaxation of my breast has been procured, I think, by opium, which, though it never gives me sleep, frees my breast from spasms.

I have written a little of the Lives of the Poets. I think with all my usual vigour. I have made sermons, perhaps as readily as formerly. My memory is less faithful in retaining names, and, I am afraid, in retaining occurrences. Of this vacillation and vagrancy of mind, I impute a great part to a fortuitous and unsettled life, and therefore purpose to spend my time with more method.]

On Monday, 20th April, I found him at home in the morning. We talked of a gentleman who we apprehended was gradually involving his circumstances by bad management[1]. JOHNSON. "Wasting a fortune is evaporation by a thousand imperceptible means. If it were a stream, they 'd stop it. You must speak to him. It is really miserable. Were he a gamester, it could be said he had hopes of winning. Were he a bankrupt in trade, he might have grown rich; but he has neither spirit to spend, nor resolution to spare. He does not spend fast enough to have pleasure from it. He has the crime of prodigality, and the wretchedness of parsimony. If a man is killed in a duel, he is killed as many a one has been killed; but it is a sad thing for a man to lie down and die; to bleed to death, because he has not fortitude enough to sear the wound, or even to stitch it up." I cannot but pause a moment to admire the fecundity of fancy, and choice of language, which in this instance, and, indeed, on almost all occasions, he displayed. It was well observed by Dr. Percy, (afterwards Bishop of Dromore), "The conversation of Johnson is strong and clear, and may be compared to an antique statue, where every vein and muscle is distinct and bold. Ordinary conversation resembles an inferiour cast."

On Saturday, 25th April, I dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with the learned Dr. Musgrave[2], Counsellor Leland of Ireland, son to the historian, Mrs. Cholmondeley, and some more ladies. "The Project," a new poem, was read to the company by Dr. Musgrave. JOHNSON. "Sir, it has no power. Were it not for the well-known names with which it is filled, it would be nothing: the names carry the poet, not the poet the names." MUSGRAVE. "A temporary poem always entertains us." JOHNSON. "So does an account of the criminals hanged yesterday entertain us."

He proceeded;—"Demosthenes Taylor, as he was called (that is, the editor of Demosthenes), was the most silent man, the merest statue of a man, that I have ever seen. I once dined in company with him, and all he said during the whole time was no more than *Richard*. How a man should say only *Richard*, it is not easy to imagine. But it was thus: Dr. Douglas was talking of Dr. Zachary Grey, and ascribing to him something that was written by Dr. Richard Grey. So, to correct him, Taylor said '*Richard*.'"

Mrs. Cholmondeley, in a high flow of spirits, exhibited some lively sallies of hyperbolical compliment to Johnson, with whom she had been long acquainted, and was very easy. He was quick in catching the *manner* of the moment, and answered her somewhat in the style of the hero of a romance, "Madam, you crown me with unfading laurels."

[Sitting at table one day with Mrs. Cholmondeley, he took hold of her hand in the middle of dinner, and held it close to his eye, wondering at the delicacy and whiteness, till, with a smile, she asked, "Will he give it to me again when he has done with it?"] Murph. Essay, p. 157.

I happened, I know not how, to say that a pamphlet meant a prose piece. JOHNSON. "No, sir. A few sheets of poetry unbound are a pamphlet[3], as much as a few sheets of prose." MUSGRAVE. "A pamphlet may be understood to mean a poetical piece in Westminster-hall, that is, in formal language; but in common language it is understood to mean prose." JOHNSON. (And here was one of the many instances of his knowing clearly and telling exactly how a thing is),

[1] [Mr. Langton.—ED.]

[2] Samuel Musgrave, M. D. editor of the Euripides, and authour of "Dissertations on the Grecian Mythology," &c. published in 1782, after his death, by the learned Mr. Tyrwhitt.—MALONE. [I suppose this is the same who was made Radcliffe's travelling fellow in 1760. He was of C. C. C. M. A. 1756. B. and D. M. 1775.—HALL.]

[3] Dr Johnson is here perfectly correct, and is supported by the usage of preceding writers. So in Musarum Deliciæ, a collection of poems, 8vo. 1656, (the writer is speaking of Suckling's play entitled Aglaura, printed in folio):

"This great voluminous *pamphlet* may be said,
To be like one, that hath more hair than head."—
MALONE.

"A pamphlet is understood in common language to mean prose, only from this, that there is so much more prose written than poetry; as when we say a *book*, prose is understood for the same reason, though a book may as well be in poetry as in prose. We understand what is most general, and we name what is less frequent."

We talked of a lady's verses on Ireland. Miss Reynolds. "Have you seen them, sir?" Johnson. "No, madam; I have seen a translation from Horace, by one of her daughters. She showed it me." Miss Reynolds. "And how was it, sir?" Johnson. "Why, very well, for a young miss's verses; that is to say, compared with excellence, nothing; but very well, for the person who wrote them. I am vexed at being shown verses in that manner." Miss Reynolds. "But if they should be good, why not give them hearty praise?" Johnson. "Why, madam, because I have not then got the better of my bad humour from having been shown them. You must consider, madam, beforehand they may be bad as well as good. Nobody has a right to put another under such a difficulty, that he must either hurt the person by telling the truth, or hurt himself by telling what is not true." Boswell. "A man often shows his writings to people of eminence, to obtain from them, either from their good-nature, or from their not being able to tell the truth firmly, a commendation, of which he may afterwards avail himself." Johnson. "Very true, sir. Therefore, the man who is asked by an authour, what he thinks of his work, is put to *the torture*, and is not obliged to speak the truth; so that what he says is not considered as his opinion; yet he has said it, and cannot retract it; and this authour, when mankind are hunting him with a canister at his tail, can say, 'I would not have published, had not Johnson, or Reynolds, or Musgrave, or some other good judge commended the work.' Yet I consider it as a very difficult question in conscience, whether one should advise a man not to publish a work, if profit be his object; for the man may say, 'Had it not been for you, I should have had the money.' Now you cannot be sure; for you have only your own opinion, and the publick may think very differently." Sir Joshua Reynolds. "You must upon such an occasion have two judgments; one as to the real value of the work, the other as to what may please the general taste at the time." Johnson. "But you can be *sure* of neither; and therefore I should scruple much to give a suppressive vote. Both Goldsmith's comedies were once refused, his first by Garrick, his second by Colman, who was prevailed on at last by much solicitation, nay, a kind of force, to bring it on. His 'Vicar of Wakefield' I myself did not think would have had much success. It was written and sold to a bookseller before his 'Traveller,' but published after; so little expectation had the bookseller from it. Had it been sold after 'The Traveller,' he might have had twice as much money for it, though sixty guineas was no mean price. The bookseller had the advantage of Goldsmith's reputation from 'The Traveller' in the sale, though Goldsmith had it not in selling the copy." Sir Joshua Reynolds. "The Beggar's Opera affords a proof how strangely people will differ in opinion about a literary performance. Burke thinks it has no merit." Johnson. "It was refused by one of the houses; but I should have thought it would succeed, not from any great excellence in the writing, but from the novelty, and the general spirit and gaiety of the piece, which keeps the audience always attentive, and dismisses them in good humour."

We went to the drawing-room, where was a considerable increase of company. Several of us got round Dr. Johnson, and complained that he would not give us an exact catalogue of his works, that there might be a complete edition. He smiled, and evaded our entreaties. That he intended to do it, I have no doubt, because I have heard him say so; and I have in my possession an imperfect list, fairly written out which he entitles *Historia Studiorum*. I once got from one of his friends a list, which there was pretty good reason to suppose was accurate, for it was written down in his presence by this friend, who enumerated each article aloud, and had some of them mentioned to him by Mr. Levett, in concert with whom it was made out; and Johnson, who heard all this, did not contradict it. But when I showed a copy of this list to him, and mentioned the evidence for its exactness, he laughed, and said, "I was willing to let them go on as they pleased, and never interfered." Upon which I read it to him, article by article, and got him positively to own or refuse; and then, having obtained certainty so far, I got some other articles confirmed by him directly, and, afterwards, from time to time, made additions under his sanction.

His friend, Edward Cave, having been mentioned, he told us, "Cave used to sell ten thousand of 'The Gentleman's Magazine;' yet such was then his minute attention and anxiety that the sale should not suffer the smallest decrease, that he would name a particular person who he heard had talked of leaving off the Magazine, and would say, 'Let us have something good next month.'"

It was observed, that avarice was inherent in some dispositions. Johnson. "No

man was born a miser, because no man was born to possession. Every man is born *cupidus*—desirous of getting; but not *avarus*—desirous of keeping." BOSWELL. "I have heard old Mr. Sheridan maintain, with much ingenuity, that a complete miser is a happy man: a miser who gives himself wholly to the one passion of saving." JOHNSON. "That is flying in the face of all the world, who have called an avaricious man a *miser*, because he is miserable. No, sir; a man who both spends and saves money is the happiest man, because he has both enjoyments."

The conversation having turned on *bon-mots*, he quoted, from one of the *Ana*, an exquisite instance of flattery in a maid of honour in France, who being asked by the queen what o'clock it was, answered, "What your majesty pleases[1]." He admitted that Mr. Burke's classical pun[2] upon Mr. Wilkes's being carried on the shoulders of the mob,

'——————— numerisque fertur
Lege solutis,"

HOR. 4. OD. 2. 25.

was admirable; and though he was strangely unwilling to allow to that extraordinary man the talent of wit[3], he also laughed with approbation at another of his playful conceits; which was, that "Horace has in one line given a description of a good desirable manour:

'Est *modus* in rebus, sunt certi denique *fines*[4];'
1 SAT. 1. 106.

that is to say, a *modus* as to the tithes and certain *fines*."

He observed, "A man cannot with propriety speak of himself, except he relates simple facts; as, 'I was at Richmond:' or what depends on mensuration; as, 'I am six feet high.' He is sure he has been at Richmond; he is sure he is six feet high; but he cannot be sure he is wise, or that he has any other excellence. Then, all censure of a man's self is oblique praise. It is in order to show how much he can spare. It has all the invidiousness of self-praise and all the reproach of falsehood." BOSWELL. "Sometimes it may proceed from a man's strong consciousness of his faults being observed. He knows that others would throw him down, and therefore he had better lie down softly of his own accord."

On Tuesday, April 28, he was engaged to dine at General Paoli's, where, as I have already observed, I was still entertained in elegant hospitality, and with all the ease and comfort of a home. I called on him, and accompanied him in a hackney-coach. We stopped first at the bottom of Hedge-lane, into which he went to leave a letter, "with good news for a poor man in distress," as he told me. I did not question him particularly as to this. He himself often resembled Lady Bolingbroke's lively description of Pope: that "he was *un politique aux choux et aux raves*." He would say, "I dine to-day in Grosvenor-square;" this might be with a duke; or, perhaps, "I dine to-day at the other end of the town;" or, "A gentleman of great eminence called on me yesterday." He loved thus to keep things floating in conjecture: *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est.* I believe I ventured to dissipate the cloud, to unveil the mystery, more freely and frequently than any of his friends. We stopped again at Wirgman's, the well-known *toy-shop* in St. James's-street, at the corner of St. James's-place, to which he had been directed, but not clearly, for he searched about some time, and could not find it at first; and said, "To direct one only to a corner shop is *toying* with one." I supposed he meant this as a play upon the word *toy;* it was the first time that I knew him stoop to such sport. After he had been some time in the shop, he sent for me to come out of the coach, and help him to choose a pair of silver buckles, as those he had were too small. Probably this alteration in dress had been suggested by Mrs. Thrale, by associating with whom, his external appearance was much improved. He got better clothes; and the dark colour, from which he never deviated, was enliven-

[1] ['The anecdote is told in "*Menagiana*," vol. iii. p. 104, but not of a "*maid of honour*," nor as an instance of "*exquisite flattery*." "M. de Uzès était chevalier d'honneur de la reine. Cette princesse lui demanda un jour quelle heure il était; il répondit, 'Madame, l'heure qu'il plaira à votre majesté.'" Menage tells it as *a pleasantry* of M. de Uzès; but M. de la Monnoye says, that this duke was remarkable for *naïvetés* and blunders, and was a kind of *butt*, to whom the wits of the court used to attribute all manner of absurdities.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 330.—ED.]

[3] See this question fully investigated in the notes upon the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," *ante*, v. i. p. 330, *et seq.* And here, as a lawyer mindful of the maxim *Suum cuique tribuito*, I cannot forbear to mention, that the additional note, beginning with "I find since the former edition," is not mine, but was obligingly furnished by Mr. Malone, who was so kind as to superintend the press while I was in Scotland, and the first part of the second edition was printing. He would not allow me to ascribe it to its proper authour; but, as it is exquisitely acute and elegant, I take this opportunity, without his knowledge, to do him justice.—BOSWELL

[4] This, as both Mr. Bindley and Dr. Kearney have observed to me, is the motto to "An Inquiry into Customary Estates and Tenants' Rights, &c.; with some Considerations for restraining excessive *Fines*," by Everard Fleetwood, Esq. 8vo 1731. But it is, probably, a mere coincidence Mr. Burke, perhaps, never saw that pamphlet.—MALONE.

ed by metal buttons. His wigs, too, were much better; and, during their travels in France, he was furnished with a Paris-made wig, of handsome construction. [In general his wigs were very shabby, and their fore parts were burned away by the near approach of the candle, which his short-sightedness rendered necessary in reading. At Streatham, Mr. Thrale's butler had always a better wig ready, and as Johnson passed from the drawing-room, when dinner was announced, the servant would remove the ordinary wig, and replace it with the newer one, and this ludicrous ceremony was performed every day.] This choosing of silver buckles was a negotiation: "Sir," said he, "I will not have the ridiculous large ones now in fashion; and I will give no more than a guinea for a pair." Such were the *principles* of the business; and, after some examination, he was fitted. As we drove along, I found him in a talking humour, of which I availed myself. Boswell. "I was this morning in Ridley's shop, sir; and was told, that the collection called '*Johnsoniana*[1]' had sold very much." Johnson. "Yet the 'Journey to the Hebrides' has not had a great sale[2]." Boswell. "That is strange." Johnson. "Yes, sir; for in that book I have told the world a great deal that they did not know before."

Ed.

Boswell. "I drank chocolate, sir, this morning with Mr. Eld; and, to my no small surprise, found him to be a *Staffordshire whig*, a being which I did not believe had existed." Johnson. "Sir, there are rascals in all countries." Boswell. "Eld said, a *tory* was a creature generated between a non-juring parson and one's grandmother." Johnson. "And I have always said, the first whig was the devil." Boswell. "He certainly was, sir. The devil was impatient of subordination; he was the first who resisted power:

'Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven.'"

At General Paoli's were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Marchese Gherardi of Lombardy, and Mr. John Spottiswoode the younger, of Spottiswoode[3], the solicitor. At this time fears of an invasion were circulated; to obviate which Mr. Spottiswoode observed, that Mr. Fraser, the engineer, who had lately come from Dunkirk, said that the French had the same fears of us Johnson. "It is thus that mutual cowardice keeps us in peace. Were one half of mankind brave, and one half cowards, the brave would be always beating the cowards Were all brave, they would lead a very uneasy life; all would be continually fighting: but being all cowards, we go on very well." [One afternoon, while all the talk was of this apprehended invasion, he said most pathetically, "Alas! alas! how this unmeaning stuff spoils all my comfort in my friends' conversation! Will the people never have done with it; and shall I never hear a sentence again without the French in it? Here is no invasion coming, and you know there is none. Let such vexatious and frivolous talk alone, or suffer it at least to teach you *one* truth; and learn by this perpetual echo of even unapprehended distress, how historians magnify events expected, or calamities endured; when you know they are at this very moment collecting all the big words they can find, in which to describe a consternation never felt, or a misfortune which never happened. Among all your lamentations, who eats the less? Who sleeps the worse, for one general's ill success, or another's capitulation? Oh, pray let us hear no more of it!"] Piozzi, p. 63, 4.

We talked of drinking wine. Johnson. "I require wine, only when I am alone. I have then often wished for it, and often taken it." Spottiswoode. "What, by way of a companion, sir?" Johnson. "To get rid of myself, to send myself away. Wine gives great pleasure; and every pleasure is of itself a good. It is a good, unless counterbalanced by evil. A man may have a strong reason not to drink wine; and that may be greater than the pleasure. Wine makes a man better pleased with himself. I do not say that it makes him more pleasing to others. Sometimes it does. But the danger is, that while a man grows better pleased with himself, he may be growing less pleasing to others[4]

[1] [See *ante*, p. 31.—Ed.]

[2] Here he either was mistaken, or had a different notion of an extensive sale from what is generally entertained: for the fact is, that four thousand copies of that excellent work were sold very quickly. A new edition has been printed since his death, besides that in the collection of his works. —Boswell. Another edition has been printed since Mr. Boswell wrote the above, besides repeated editions in the general collection of his works during the last twenty years.—Malone.

[3] In the phraseology of Scotland, I should have said, "Mr. John Spottiswoode the younger, *of that ilk*." Johnson knew that sense of the word very well, and has thus explained it in his "Dictionary"—*voce*, *Ilk*. "It also signifies 'the same;' as, *Mackintosh of that ilk*, denotes a gentleman whose surname and the title of his estate are the same."—Boswell.

[4] It is observed in "Waller's Life," in the "Biographia Britannica," that he drank only water, and that while he sat in a company who were drinking wine, "he had the dexterity to accommodate his discourse to the pitch of theirs as it *sunk*." If excess in drinking be meant, the remark is acutely just. But surely, a moderate use of wine gives a gaiety of spirits which water-drinkers know not.—Boswell.

Wine gives a man nothing. It neither gives him knowledge nor wit; it only animates a man, and enables him to bring out what a dread of the company has repressed. It only puts in motion what has been locked up in frost. But this may be good, or it may be bad." SPOTTISWOODE. "So, sir, wine is a key which opens a box; but this box may be either full or empty?" JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, conversation is the key: wine is a pick-lock, which forces open the box, and injures it. A man should cultivate his mind so as to have that confidence and readiness without wine, which wine gives." BOSWELL. "The great difficulty of resisting wine is from benevolence. For instance, a good worthy man asks you to taste his wine, which he has had twenty years in his cellar." JOHNSON. 'Sir, all this notion about benevolence arises from a man's imagining himself to be of more importance to others than he really is. They don't care a farthing whether he drinks wine or not." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Yes, they do for the time." JOHNSON. "For the time! If they care this minute, they forget it the next. And as for the good worthy man, how do you know he is good and worthy? No good and worthy man will insist upon another man's drinking wine. As to the wine twenty years in the cellar,—of ten men, three say this, merely because they must say something; three are telling a lie, when they say they have had the wine twenty years;—three would rather save the wine; one, perhaps, cares.' I allow it is something to please one's company; and people are always pleased with those who partake pleasure with them. But after a man has brought himself to relinquish the great personal pleasure which arises from drinking wine [1], any other consideration is a trifle. To please others by drinking wine, is something only, if there be nothing against it. I should, however, be sorry to offend worthy men:

'Curst be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
That tends to make one worthy man my foe.'"

BOSWELL. "Curst be the *spring*, the *water*." JOHNSON. "But let us consider what a sad thing it would be, if we were obliged to drink or do any thing else that may happen to be agreeable to the company where we are." LANGTON. "By the same rule, you must join with a gang of cut-purses." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but yet we must do justice to wine; we must allow it the power it possesses. To make a man pleased with himself, let me tell you, is doing a very great thing;

'Si patriæ volumus, si *nobis* vivere cari.'"

I was at this time myself a water-drinker, upon trial, by Johnson's recommendation JOHNSON. "Boswell is a bolder combatant than Sir Joshua; he argues for wine without the help of wine; but Sir Joshua with it." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "But to please one's company is a strong motive." JOHNSON (who, from drinking only water, supposed every body who drank wine to be elevated). "I won't argue any more with you, sir. You are too far gone." SIR JOSHUA. "I should have thought so indeed, sir, had I made such a speech as you have now done." JOHNSON (drawing himself in, and, I really thought, blushing). "Nay, don't be angry. I did not mean to offend you." SIR JOSHUA. "At first the taste of wine was disagreeable to me; but I brought myself to drink it, that I might be like other people. The pleasure of drinking wine is so connected with pleasing your company, that altogether there is something of social goodness in it." JOHNSON. "Sir, this is only saying the same thing over again." SIR JOSHUA. "No, this is new." JOHNSON. "You put it in new words, but it is an old thought. This is one of the disadvantages of wine, it makes a man mistake words for thoughts." BOSWELL. "I think it is a new thought; at least it is in a new *attitude*." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, it is only in a new coat; or an old coat with a new facing." Then laughing heartily: "It is the old dog in the new doublet. An extraordinary instance, however, may occur where a man's patron will do nothing for him, unless he will drink: *there* may be a good reason for drinking."

I mentioned a nobleman [2], who I believed was really uneasy, if his company would not drink hard. JOHNSON. "That is from having had people about him whom he has been accustomed to command.' BOSWELL. "Supposing I should be *tête à-tête* with him at table?" JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no more reason for your drinking with *him*, than his being sober with *you*." BOSWELL. "Why, that is true; for it would do him less hurt to be sober, than it would do me to get drunk." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and from what I have heard of him, one would not wish to sacrifice himself to such a man. If he must always have somebody to drink with him, he should buy a slave, and then he would be sure to have it. They who submit to drink as another pleases, make themselves his slaves." BOSWELL. "But, sir, you will surely make allowance for the duty of hospitality. A gentleman who loves drinking, comes to visit me." JOHNSON. "Sir, a man knows whom he visits; he comes to the table of a sober man." BOSWELL

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 39, and p. 64.—ED.]

[2] [Perhaps Lord Kellie. See *ante*, p. 120.—ED.]

"But, sir, you and I should not have been so well received in the Highlands and Hebrides, if I had not drunk with our worthy friends. Had I drunk water only as you did, they would not have been so cordial." JOHNSON. "Sir William Temple mentions, that in his travels through the Netherlands he had two or three gentlemen with him; and when a bumper was necessary, he put it on *them*. Were I to travel again through the islands, I would have Sir Joshua with me to take the bumpers." BOSWELL. "But, sir, let me put a case. Suppose Sir Joshua should take a jaunt into Scotland; he does me the honour to pay me a visit at my house in the country; I am overjoyed at seeing him; we are quite by ourselves; shall I unsociably and churlishly let him sit drinking by himself? No, no, my dear Sir Joshua, you shall not be treated so; I *will* take a bottle with you."

The celebrated Mrs. Rudd[1] being mentioned: JOHNSON. "Fifteen years ago I should have gone to see her." SPOTTISWOODE. "Because she was fifteen years younger?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; but now they have a trick of putting every thing into the newspapers."

He begged of General Paoli to repeat one of the introductory stanzas of the first book of Tasso's "Jerusalem," which he did, and then Johnson found fault with the simile of sweetening the edges of a cup for a child, being transferred from Lucretius into an epick poem. The general said he did not imagine Homer's poetry was so ancient as is supposed, because he ascribes to a Greek colony circumstances of refinement not found in Greece itself at a later period, when Thucydides wrote. JOHNSON. "I recollect but one passage quoted by Thucydides from Homer, which is not to be found in our copies of Homer's works; I am for the antiquity of Homer, and think that a Grecian colony by being nearer Persia might be more refined than the mother country."

On Wednesday, 29th April, I dined with him at Mr. Allan Ramsay's, where were Lord Binning, Dr. Robertson, the historian, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the Honourable Mrs. Boscawen[2], widow of the admiral, and mother of the present Viscount Falmouth; of whom, if it be not presumptuous in me to praise her, I would say, that her manners are the most agreeable, and her conversation the best, of any lady with whom I ever had the happiness to be acquainted. Before Johnson came we talked a good deal of him. Ramsay said, he had always found him a very polite man, and that he treated him with great respect, which he did very sincerely. I said, I worshipped him. ROBERTSON. "But some of you spoil him: you should not worship him; you should worship no man." BOSWELL. "I cannot help worshipping him, he is so much superiour to other men." ROBERTSON. "In criticism, and in wit and conversation, he is no doubt very excellent; but in other respects he is not above other men: he will believe any thing, and will strenuously defend the most minute circumstance connected with the church of England." BOSWELL. "Believe me, Doctor, you are much mistaken as to this; for when you talk with him calmly in private, he is very liberal in his way of thinking." ROBERTSON. "He and I have been always very gracious; the first time I met him was one evening at Strahan's, when he had just had an unlucky altercation with Adam Smith[3], to whom he had been so rough, that Strahan, after Smith was gone, had remonstrated with him, and told him that I was coming soon, and that he was uneasy to think that he might behave in the same manner to me. 'No, no, sir, (said Johnson), I warrant you Robertson and I shall do very well.' Accordingly he was gentle and good humoured and courteous with me, the whole evening; and he has been so upon every occasion that we have met since. I have often said, (laughing) that I have been in a great measure indebted to Smith for my good reception." BOSWELL. "His power of reasoning is very strong, and he has a peculiar art of drawing characters, which is as rare as good portrait painting." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "He is undoubtedly admirable in this: but, in order to mark the characters which he draws, he overcharges them, and gives people more than they really have, whether of good or bad."

No sooner did he, of whom we had been thus talking so easily, arrive, than we were all as quiet as a school upon the entrance of the head-master; and we very soon sat down to a table covered with such variety of good things, as contributed not a little to dispose him to be pleased.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 38, *n.*—ED.]

[2] [Frances, daughter of William Evelyn Glanville, Esq., married in 1742 to Admiral Boscawen. They were the parents of George Evelyn, third Viscount Falmouth, of Frances, married to the Hon. John Leveson Gower, and of Elizabeth, the wife of the fifth Duke of Beaufort. Mrs. Boscawen died in 1805.—ED.]

[3] [The Editor thinking it was hardly possible that Boswell should have omitted all mention of Adam Smith *if* Johnson had met him at Glasgow, almost doubts whether the violent scene reported to have taken place *there* (*ante*, v. i. p. 453-4) might not, in fact, have been *that* which occurred at Mr. Strahan's, in London, referred to by Dr. Robertson. It is clear, that, after such a parting, they never could have met in society again.—ED.]

RAMSAY. "I am old enough[1] to have been a contemporary of Pope. His poetry was highly admired in his life-time, more a great deal than after his death." JOHNSON. "Sir, it has not been less admired since his death; no authours ever had so much fame in their own life-time as Pope and Voltaire; and Pope's poetry has been as much admired since his death as during his life; it has only not been as much talked of, but that is owing to its being now more distant, and people having other writings to talk of. Virgil is less talked of than Pope, and Homer is less talked of than Virgil; but they are not less admired. We must read what the world reads at the moment. It has been maintained that this superfetation, this teeming of the press in modern times, is prejudicial to good literature, because it obliges us to read so much of what is of inferiour value, in order to be in the fashion; so that better works are neglected for want of time, because a man will have more gratification of his vanity in conversation, from having read modern books, than from having read the best works of antiquity. But it must be considered, that we have now more knowledge generally diffused; all our ladies read now, which is a great extension. Modern writers are the moons of literature; they shine with reflected light, with light borrowed from the ancients. Greece appears to me to be the fountain of knowledge; Rome of elegance." RAMSAY. "I suppose Homer's 'Iliad' to be a collection of pieces which had been written before his time. I should like to see a translation of it in poetical prose, like the book of Ruth or Job." ROBERTSON. "Would you, Dr. Johnson, who are a master of the English language, but try your hand upon a part of it." JOHNSON. "Sir, you would not read it without the pleasure of verse[2]."

We talked of antiquarian researches. JOHNSON. "All that is really *known* of the ancient state of Britain is contained in a few pages. We *can* know no more than what the old writers have told us; yet what large books have we upon it, the whole of which, excepting such parts as are taken from those old writers, is all a dream, such as Whitaker's 'Manchester.' I have heard Henry's 'History of Britain' well spoken of; I am told it is carried on in separate divisions, as the civil, the military, the religious history; I wish much to have one branch well done, and that is the history of manners, of common life." ROBERTSON. "Henry should have applied his attention to that alone, which is enough for any man; and he might have found a great deal scattered in various books, had he read solely with that view. Henry erred in not selling his first volume at a moderate price to the booksellers, that they might have pushed him on till he had got reputation. I sold my 'History of Scotland' at a moderate price, as a work by which the booksellers might either gain or not; and Cadell has told me, that Miller and he have got six thousand pounds by it. I afterwards received a much higher price for my writings. An authour should sell his first work for what the booksellers will give, till it shall appear whether he is an authour of merit, or, which is the same thing as to purchase-money, an authour who pleases the publick."

Dr. Robertson expatiated on the character of a certain nobleman[3]; that he was one of the strongest-minded men that ever lived; that he would sit in company quite sluggish, while there was nothing to call forth his intellectual vigour; but the moment that any important subject was started, for instance, how this country is to be defended against a French invasion, he would rouse himself, and show his extraordinary talents with the most powerful ability and animation. JOHNSON. "Yet this man cut his own throat. The true strong and sound mind is the mind that can embrace equally great things and small. Now I am told the King of Prussia will say to a servant, 'Bring me a bottle of such a wine, which came in such a year; it lies in such a corner of the cellars.' I would have a man great in great things, and elegant in little things." He said to me afterwards, when we were by ourselves, "Robertson was in a mighty romantick humour, he talked of one whom he did not know; but I *downed* him with the King of Prussia." "Yes, sir," said I, "you threw a *bottle* at his head."

An ingenious gentleman was mentioned, concerning whom both Robertson and Ramsay agreed that he had a constant firmness of mind; for after a laborious day, and amidst a multiplicity of cares and anxieties, he would sit down with his sisters and be quite cheerful and good-humoured. Such a disposition, it was observed, was the happy gift of nature. JOHNSON. "I do not think so: a man has from nature a certain portion of mind; the use he makes of it depends upon his own free will. That a man has always the same firmness of mind, I do not say: because every man feels his mind less firm at one time than another; but I think, a man's being in a good or bad hu

[1] [Mr. Ramsay was just of Johnson's age.—ED.]

[2] This experiment, which Madame Dacier made in vain, has since been tried in our own language, by the editor of "Ossian," and we must either think very meanly of his abilities, or allow that Dr. Johnson was in the right. And Mr. Cowper, a man of real genius, has miserably failed in his blank verse translation.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Lord Clive.—ED.]

mour depends upon his will." I, however, could not help thinking that a man's humour is often uncontrollable by his will.

Johnson harangued against drinking wine. "A man," said he, "may choose whether he will have abstemiousness and knowledge, or claret and ignorance." Dr. Robertson, (who is very companionable), was beginning to dissent as to the proscription of claret. JOHNSON (with a placid smile). "Nay, sir, you shall not differ with me; as I have said that the man is most perfect who takes in the most things, I am for knowledge and claret." ROBERTSON (holding a glass of generous claret in his hand). "Sir, I can only drink your health." JOHNSON. "Sir, I should be sorry if *you* should be ever in such a state as to be able to do nothing more." ROBERTSON. "Dr. Johnson, allow me to say, that in one respect I have the advantage of you; when you were in Scotland you would not come to hear any of our preachers; whereas, when I am here, I attend your publick worship without scruple, and, indeed, with great satisfaction." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that is not so extraordinary: the King of Siam sent ambassadors to Louis the Fourteenth, but Louis the Fourteenth sent none to the King of Siam[1]."

Here my friend for once discovered a want of knowledge or forgetfulness; for Louis the Fourteenth did send an embassy to the King of Siam[2], and the Abbé Choisi, who was employed in it, published an account of it in two volumes.

Next day, Thursday, April 30, I found him at home by himself. JOHNSON. "Well, sir, Ramsay gave us a splendid dinner. I love Ramsay. You will not find a man in whose conversation there is more instruction, more information, and more elegance, than in Ramsay's." BOSWELL. "What I admire in Ramsay, is his continuing to be so young." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, it is to be admired. I value myself upon this, that there is nothing of the old man in my conversation[3]. I am now sixty-eight, and I have no more of it than at twenty-eight." BOSWELL. "But, sir, would not you wish to know old age? He who is never an old man does not know the whole of human life; for old age is one of the divisions of it." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, what talk is this?" BOSWELL. "I mean, sir, the Sphinx's description of it:—morning, noon, and night. I would know night, as well as morning and noon." JOHNSON. "What, sir, would you know what it is to feel the evils of old age? Would you have the gout? Would you have decrepitude?" Seeing him heated, I would not argue any farther; but I was confident that I was in the right. I would, in due time, be a Nestor, an elder of the people; and there *should* be some difference between the conversation of twenty-eight and sixty-eight[4]. A grave picture should not be gay. There is a serene, solemn, placid old age. JOHNSON. "Mrs. Thrale's mother said of me what flattered me much. A clergyman was complaining of want of society in the country where he lived; and said, 'They talk of *runts*, (that is, young cows)[5]. 'Sir (said Mrs. Salisbury), Mr Johnson would learn to talk of runts;' meaning that I was a man who would make the most of my situation, whatever it was." He added, "I think myself a very polite man."

[Johnson expressed a similar opinion of his own politeness to Mrs. Thrale, and, oddly enough, on two particular occasions, in which the want of that quality seemed remarkably apparent. Dr. Johnson delighted in his own partiality for Oxford; and one day, at her house, entertained five members of the other university with various instances of the superiority of Oxford, enumerating the gigantic names of many men whom it had produced, with apparent triumph. At last

Piozzi, p. 27-8, 199, 200.

[1] Mrs. Piozzi confidently mentions this as having passed in Scotland.—*Anecdotes*, p. 62.—BOSWELL.

[2] The Abbé de Choisi was sent by Louis XIV. on an embassy to the King of Siam in 1683, with a view, it has been said, to convert the king of the country to Christianity.—MALONE.

[3] [Johnson in his "Meditations" (April 20, *ante*, p. 179), congratulates himself on writing with all his usual vigour. "I have made *sermons*," says he, "as readily as formerly." Probably, those which were *left for publication* by Dr. Taylor, and written, perhaps (or some of them), at Ashbourne in the preceding autumn. See *ante* p 124.—HALL.]

[4] Johnson clearly meant (what the authour has often elsewhere mentioned), that he had none of the listlessness of old age, that he had the same *activity and energy of mind*, as formerly; not that a man of sixty-eight might dance in a publick assembly with as much propriety as he could at twenty-eight. His conversation being the product of much various knowledge, great acuteness, and extraordinary wit, was equally well suited to every period of life; and as in his youth it probably did not not exhibit any unbecoming levity, so certainly in his later years it was totally free from the garrulity and querulousness of old age.—MALONE.

[5] Such is the signification of this word in Scotland, and it should seem in Wales. (See Skinner in *v.*) But the heifers of Scotland and Wales, when brought to England, being always smaller than those of this country, the word *runt* has acquired a secondary sense, and generally signifies a heifer diminutive in size, small beyond the ordinary growth of that animal; and in this sense alone the word is acknowledged by Dr. Johnson in his Dictionary.—MALONE

Mrs. Thrale said to him, "Why there happens to be no less than five Cambridge men in the room now." "I did not," said he, "think of that till you told me; but the wolf do n't count the sheep." When the company were retired, the domestic circle happened to be talking of Dr. Barnard, the provost of Eton, who died about that time; and after a long and just eulogium on his wit, his learning, and goodness of heart,—Dr. Johnson said, quite seriously, "He was the only man, too, that did justice to my good breeding; and you may observe that I am well-bred to a degree of needless scrupulosity. No man," continued he, not observing the amazement of his hearers, "no man is so cautious not to interrupt another; no man thinks it so necessary to appear attentive when others are speaking; no man so steadily refuses preference to himself, or so willingly bestows it on another, as I do; nobody holds so strongly as I do the necessity of ceremony, and the ill effects which follow the breach of it: yet people think me rude; but Barnard did me justice." "'Tis pity," said Mrs. Thrale, laughing, "that he had not heard you compliment the Cambridge men after dinner to-day!"

Piozzi, p. 199, 200. On another occasion, he had been professing that he was very attentive not to offend, and very careful to maintain the ceremonies of life; and had told Mr. Thrale, that though he had never sought to please till he was past thirty, considering the matter as hopeless, yet he had been always studious not to make enemies, by apparent preference of himself. It happened, that this curious conversation, of which Mrs. Thrale was a silent auditress, passed, in her coach, in some distant province, either Shropshire or Derbyshire; and as soon as it was over, Dr. Johnson took out of his pocket a little book and was reading, when a gentleman, of no small distinction for his birth and elegance, suddenly rode up to the carriage, and paying them all his proper compliments, was desirous not to neglect Dr. Johnson; but observing that he did not see him, tapped him gently on the shoulder. "'Tis Mr. Cholmondeley," said Mr. Thrale. "Well, sir! and what if it is Mr. Cholmondeley!" said the other sternly, just lifting his eyes a moment from his book, and returning to it again with renewed avidity.]

Ed. [Miss Reynolds describes these points of Johnson's character with more discrimination.

Reyn. Recol. "That Dr. Johnson possessed the essential principles of politeness and of good taste (which I suppose are the same, at least concomitant), none who knew his virtues and his genius will, I imagine, be disposed to dispute. But why they remained with him, like gold in the ore, unfashioned and unseen, except in his literary capacity, no person that I know of has made any inquiry though in general it has been spoken of as an unaccountable inconsistency in his character. Much, too, may be said in excuse for an apparent asperity of manners which were, at times at least, the natural effect of those inherent mental infirmities to which he was subject. His corporeal defects also contributed largely to the singularity of his manners; and a little reflection on the disqualifying influence of *blindness* and *deafness* would suggest many apologies for Dr. Johnson's want of politeness. The particular instance[1] I have just mentioned, of his inability to discriminate the features of any one's face, deserves perhaps more than any other to be taken into consideration, wanting, as he did, the aid of those intelligent signs, or insinuations, which the countenance displays in social converse; and which, in their slightest degree, influence and regulate the manners of the polite, or even the common observer. And to his defective hearing, perhaps, his unaccommodating manners may be equally ascribed, which not only precluded him from the perception of the expressive tones of the voice of others, but from hearing the boisterous sound of his own: and nothing, I believe, more conduced to fix upon his character the general stigma of ill-breeding, than his loud imperious tone of voice, which apparently heightened the slightest dissent to a tone of harsh reproof; and, with his corresponding aspect, had an intimidating influence on those who were not much acquainted with him, and excited a degree of resentment which his words in ordinary circumstances would not have provoked. I have often heard him on such occasions express great surprise, that what he had said could have given any offence Under such disadvantages, it was not much to be wondered at that Dr. Johnson should have committed many blunders and absurdities, and excited surprise and resentment in company; one in particular I remember Being in company with Mr. Garrick and some others, who were unknown to Dr. Johnson, he was saying something tending to the disparagement of the character or of the works of a gentleman present—I have forgot which; on which Mr. Garrick touched his foot under the table, but he still went on, and Garrick, much alarmed, touched him a second time, and, I believe, the third; at last Johnson exclaimed, 'David, David, is it you? What makes you tread on my toes so?' This little anecdote, perhaps, indicates as much the want

[1] [*Ante*, p. 18, *n.*—Ed.]

of prudence in Dr. Johnson as the want of sight. But had he at first seen Garrick's expressive countenance, and (probably) the embarrassment of the rest of the company on the occasion, it doubtless would not have happened."

"It were also much to be wished, in justice to Dr. Johnson's character for good manners, that many *jocular* and *ironical* speeches which have been reported had been noted as *such*, for the information of those who were unacquainted with him. Though he was fond of drawing characters, and did so *con amore*, to the delight of all who heard him, I cannot say (though he said he *loved a good hater*) that I ever heard him draw one *con odio*."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"[Thursday,] 30th April, 1778.

Letters. "Since I was fetched away from Streatham, the journal [of engagements] stands thus:

Saturday, Sir Joshua.
Sunday, Mr. Hoole.
Monday, Lord Lucan.
Tuesday, Gen. Paoli.
Wednesday, Mr. Ramsay.
Thursday, Old Bailey [1].
Friday, Club.
Saturday, Sir Joshua.
Sunday, Lady Lucan.

"Monday. Pray let it be Streatham, and very early; do, now, let it be very early. For I may be carried away—just like Ganymede of Troy.

* * * * * *

"Do, now, let me know whether you will send for me—early—on Monday. But take some care, or your letter will not come till Tuesday."

On Saturday, May 2, I dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, where there was a very large company, and a great deal of conversation; but, owing to some circumstance which I cannot now recollect, I have no record of any part of it, except that there were several people there by no means of the Johnsonian school; so that less attention was paid to him than usual, which put him out of humour: and upon some imaginary offence [2] from me, he attacked me with such rudeness, that I was vexed and angry because it gave those persons an opportunity of enlarging upon his supposed ferocity, and ill treatment of his best friends. I was so much hurt, and had my pride so much roused, that I kept away from him for a week; and, perhaps, might have kept away much longer, nay, gone to Scotland without seeing him again, had not we fortunately met and been reconciled. To such unhappy chances are human friendships liable.

On Friday, May 8, I dined with him at Mr. Langton's. I was reserved and silent, which I suppose he perceived, and might recollect the cause. After dinner, when Mr. Langton was called out of the room, and we were by ourselves, he drew his chair near to mine, and said, in a tone of conciliating courtesy, "Well, how have you done?" BOSWELL. "Sir, you have made me very uneasy by your behaviour to me when we were last at Sir Joshua Reynolds's. You know, my dear sir, no man has a greater respect and affection for you, or would sooner go to the end of the world to serve you. Now to treat me so—." He insisted that I had interrupted, which I assured him was not the case; and proceeded—"But why treat me so before people who neither love you nor me?" JOHNSON. "Well, I am sorry for it. I'll make it up to you twenty different ways, as you please." BOSWELL. "I said to-day to Sir Joshua, when he observed that you *tossed* me sometimes, I don't care how often, or how high he tosses me, when only friends are present, for then I fall upon soft ground; but I do not like falling on

[1] [There is a dinner given at the Old Bailey to the judges, council, and a few guests—perhaps it was to one of these dinners that Johnson was invited.—After the foregoing note had been written, the Editor learned that the venerable Mr. Chamberlain Clarke, now in his ninety-first year, remembers to have taken Johnson to his dinner, he being then sheriff. The judges were Blackstone and Eyre. Mr. Justice Blackstone conversed with Johnson on the subject of their absent friend, Sir Robert Chambers.—ED.]

[2] [Lord Wellesley has been so obliging as to give the Editor the following account of the cause of this quarrel: "Boswell, one day at Sir Joshua's table, chose to pronounce a high-flown panegyric on the wits of Queen Anne's reign, and exclaimed, 'How delightful it must have been to have lived in the society of Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Gay, and Bolingbroke! We have no such society in our days.' SIR JOSHUA. 'I think, Mr. Boswell you might be satisfied with your great friend's conversation' JOHNSON. 'Nay, sir, Boswell is right; every man wishes for preferment, and if Boswell had lived in those days, he would have obtained promotion.' SIR JOSHUA. 'How so, sir?' JOHNSON. 'Sir, he would have had a high place in the Dunciad.' This anecdote Lord Wellesley heard from Mr. Thomas Sydenham, who received it from Mr. Knight, on the authority of Sir Joshua Reynolds himself." The Editor, however, suspects that this is but another version of the repartee of the same kind, in reference to the Dunciad, made in Sir Joshua's presence, though not at his house, some years before (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 259). Johnson's playful retort seems so much less offensive than fifty others, that Boswell relates himself to have endured patiently, that it is improbable that he should have resented it so deeply. The anecdote, in passing through the hands of Mr. Knight and Mr. Sydenham, may have lost its true date, and acquired something beyond its true expression.—ED.]

stones, which is the case when enemies are present. I think this a pretty good image, sir." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is one of the happiest I have ever heard [1]."

The truth is, there was no venom in the wounds which he inflicted at any time, unless they were irritated by some malignant infusion by other hands. We were instantly as cordial again as ever, and joined in hearty laugh at some ludicrous but innocent peculiarities of one of our friends. BOSWELL. "Do you think, sir, it is always culpable to laugh at a man to his face?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that depends upon the man and the thing. If it is a slight man, and a slight thing, you may; for you take nothing valuable from him."

He said, "I read yesterday Dr. Blair's sermon on devotion, from the text 'Cornelius, a devout man.' His doctrine is the best limited, the best expressed: there is the most warmth without fanaticism, the most rational transport. There is one part of it which I disapprove, and I 'd have him correct it; which is, that 'he who does not feel joy in religion is far from the kingdom of heaven!' there are many good men whose fear of God predominates over their love. It may discourage. It was rashly said [2]. A noble sermon it is indeed. I wish Blair would come over to the church of England."

When Mr. Langton returned to us, the "flow of talk went on." An eminent authour [3] being mentioned: JOHNSON. "He is not a pleasant man. His conversation is neither instructive nor brilliant. He does not talk as if impelled by any fulness of knowledge or vivacity of imagination. His conversation is like that of any other sensible man. He talks with no wish either to inform or to hear, but only because he thinks it does not become —— —— to sit in a company and say nothing."

Mr. Langton having repeated the anecdote of Addison having distinguished between his powers in conversation and in writing, by saying "I have only ninepence in my pocket; but I can draw for a thousand pounds;"—JOHNSON. "He had not that retort ready, sir; he had prepared it before-hand." LANGTON (turning to me) "A fine surmise. Set a thief to catch a thief."

Johnson called the East Indians barbarians. BOSWELL. "You will except the Chinese, sir?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." BOSWELL. "Have they not arts?" JOHNSON. "They have pottery." BOSWELL "What do you say to the written characters of their language?" JOHNSON. "Sir, they have not an alphabet. They have not been able to form what all other nations have formed." BOSWELL. "There is more learning in their language than in any other, from the immense number of their characters." JOHNSON. "It is only more difficult from its rudeness; as there is more labour in hewing down a tree with a stone than with an axe."

He said, "I have been reading Lord Kames's 'Sketches of the History of Man.' In treating of severity of punishment, he mentions that of Madame Lapouchin, in Russia, but he does not give it fairly; for I have looked at *Chappe D'Auteroche*, from whom he has taken it. He stops where it is said that the spectators thought her innocent, and leaves out what follows; that she nevertheless was guilty. Now this is being as culpable as one can conceive, to misrepresent fact in a book, and for what motive? It is like one of those lies which people tell, one cannot see why. The woman's life was spared; and no punishment was too great for the favourite of an empress, who had conspired to dethrone her mistress." BOSWELL. "He was only giving a picture of the lady in her sufferings." JOHNSON "Nay, do n't endeavour to palliate this. Guilt is a principal feature in the picture. Kames is puzzled with a question that puzzled me when I was a very young man. Why is it that the interest of money is lower, when money is plentiful; for five pounds has the same proportion of value to a hundred pounds when money is plentiful, as when it is scarce? A lady explained it to me. It is (said she) because when money is plentiful there are so many more who have money to lend, that they bid down one another. Many have then a hundred pounds; and one says—Take mine rather than another's, and you shall have it at four *per cent.*" BOSWELL. "Does Lord Kames

[1] [The simplicity with which Boswell repeats this flattery, without seeing that it was only a *peace-offering*, is very characteristic and amusing. —ED.]

[2] [The passage referred to is, "Of what nature must that man's religion be, who professes to worship God and to believe in Christ, and yet raises his thoughts towards God and his Saviour without any *warmth of gratitude or love?* This is not the man whom you would choose for your *bosom friend*, or whose heart you would expect to answer with *reciprocal warmth to yours;* such a person must *as yet* be far from the kingdom of heaven."—*Blair's Sermons*, vol. i. p. 261. Dr. Johnson's remark is certainly just; and it may be, moreover, observed that, from Blair's expressions, and his reference to *human friendships and affections*, he might be understood to mean, that unless we feel the *same kind* of "warmth" and affection towards God that we do towards the objects of human love, we are far from the kingdom of heaven—an idea which seems to countenance fanaticism, and which every sober-minded christian feels to be a mere play on words; for the love of God and the love of one's wife and friend are certainly not the *same* passion.—ED.]

[3] [Probably Dr. Robertson.—ED.]

decide the question?" JOHNSON. "I think he leaves it as he found it." BOSWELL. "This must have been an extraordinary lady who instructed you, sir. May I ask who she was?" JOHNSON. "Molly Aston [1], sir, the sister of those ladies with whom you dined at Lichfield.———I shall be at home to-morrow." BOSWELL. "Then let us dine by ourselves at the Mitre, to keep up the old custom, 'the custom of the manor,' custom of the Mitre." JOHNSON. "Sir, so it shall be."

[Dr. Johnson had however an avowed and scarcely limited partiality for all who bore the name or boasted the alliance of an Aston or a Hervey; [but above all for Miss Mary Aston, whom he has celebrated in his criticisms on Pope's epitaphs, as a lady of great beauty and elegance.] And when Mr. Thrale once asked him which had been the happiest period of his past life? he replied, it was that year in which he spent one whole evening with Molly Aston. "That indeed," said he, "was not happiness, it was rapture; but the thoughts of it sweetened the whole year." Mrs. Piozzi observes, that the evening alluded to was not passed *tête-à-tête*, but in a select company, of which the present Lord Kilmorey [2] was one. "Molly," said Dr. Johnson, "was a beauty and a scholar, and a wit and a whig; and she talked all in praise of liberty: and so I made that epigram upon her.—She was the loveliest creature I ever saw!

Piozzi, p. 120.

Mrs. Piozzi asked him what his wife thought of this attachment? "She was jealous, to be sure," said he, "and teased me sometimes, when I would let her; and one day, as a fortune-telling gipsy passed us, when we were walking out in company with two or three friends in the country, she made the wench look at my hand, but soon repented her curiosity; for, says the gipsy, your heart is divided, sir, between a Betty and a Molly: Betty loves you best, but you take most delight in Molly's company: when I turned about to laugh, I saw my wife was crying. Pretty charmer! she had no reason!"]

On Saturday, May 9, we fulfilled our purpose of dining by ourselves at the Mitre, according to the old custom. There was, on these occasions, a little circumstance of kind attention to Mrs. Williams, which must not be omitted. Before coming out, and leaving her to dine alone, he gave her her choice of a chicken, a sweetbread, or any other little nice thing, which was carefully sent to her from the tavern ready drest.

Our conversation to-day, I know not how, turned, I think, for the only time at any length, during our long acquaintance, upon the sensual intercourse between the sexes, the delight of which he ascribed chiefly to imagination. "Were it not for imagination, sir," said he, "a man would be as happy in the arms of a chambermaid as of a duchess. But such is the adventitious charm of fancy, that we find men who have violated the best principles of society, and ruined their fame and their fortune, that they might possess a woman of rank." It would not be proper to record the particulars of such a conversation in moments of unreserved frankness, when nobody was present on whom it could have any hurtful effect. That subject, when philosophically treated, may surely employ the mind in a curious discussion, and as innocently as anatomy; provided that those who do treat it keep clear of inflammatory incentives.

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe,"—we were soon engaged in very different speculation; humbly and reverently considering and wondering at the universal mystery of all things, as our imperfect faculties can now judge of them. "There are," said he, "innumerable questions to which the inquisitive mind can in this state receive no answer: Why do you and I exist? Why was this world created? Since it was to be created, why was it not created sooner?"

On Sunday, May 10, I supped with him at Mr. Hoole's, with Sir Joshua Reynolds. I have neglected the memorial of this evening, so as to remember no more of it than two particulars: one that he strenuously opposed an argument by Sir Joshua, that virtue was preferable to vice, considering this life only; and that a man would be

[1] Johnson had an extraordinary admiration of this lady, notwithstanding she was a violent whig. In answer to her high-flown speeches for *liberty*, he addressed to her the following epigram, of which I presume to offer a translation:

"Liber ut esse velim, suasisti pulchra Maria,
Ut maneam liber—pulchra Maria, vale!"

Adieu, Maria! since you'd have me free:
For, who beholds thy charms, a slave must be.

A correspondent of "The Gentleman's Magazine," who subscribes himself SCIOLUS, to whom I am indebted for several excellent remarks, observes, "The turn of Dr. Johnson's lines to Miss Aston, whose whig principles he had been combating, appears to me to be taken from an ingenious epigram in the 'Menagiana,' vol. iii. p. 376, edit. 1716, on a young lady who appeared at a masquerade, *habillée en Jesuite*, during the fierce contentions of the followers of Molinos and and Jansenius concerning free-will:

"On s'etonne ici que Caliste
Ait pris l'habit de Moliniste.
Puisque cette jeune beauté
Ote a chacun sa liberté
N'est-ce pas une Janseniste?"—BOSWELL.

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 481, *n.*, where Lord Kilmorey should have been stated to be *John*, the *tenth* viscount.—ED.]

virtuosi were it only to preserve his character; and that he expressed much wonder at the curious formation of the bat, a mouse with wings; saying, that it was almost as strange a thing in physiology, as if the fabulous dragon could be seen.

On Tuesday, May 12, I waited on the Earl of Marchmont, to know if his lordship would favour Dr. Johnson with information concerning Pope, whose Life he was about to write. Johnson had not flattered himself with the hopes of receiving any civility from this nobleman; for he said to me, when I mentioned Lord Marchmont as one who could tell him a great deal about Pope, —"Sir, he will tell *me* nothing." I had the honour of being known to his lordship, and applied to him of myself, without being commissioned by Johnson. His lordship behaved in the most polite and obliging manner, promised to tell all he recollected about Pope, and was so very courteous as to say, "Tell Dr. Johnson I have a great respect for him, and am ready to show it in any way I can. I am to be in the city to-morrow, and will call at his house as I return." His lordship however asked, "Will he write the 'Lives of the Poets' impartially? He was the first that brought whig and tory into a dictionary. And what do you think of the definition of Excise? Do you know the history of his aversion to the word *transpire?*" Then taking down the folio Dictionary, he showed it with this censure on its secondary sense: 'To escape from secrecy to notice; a sense lately innovated from France, without necessity [1].' "The truth was, Lord Bolingbroke who left the Jacobites, first used it; therefore it was to be condemned. He should have shown what word would do for it, if it was unnecessary." I afterwards put the question to Johnson: "Why, sir," said he, "*get abroad.*" BOSWELL. "That, sir, is using two words." JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no end to this. You may as well insist to have a word for old age." BOSWELL. "Well, sir, *senectus.*" JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, to insist always that there should be one word to express a thing in English, because there is one in another language, is to change the language."

I availed myself of this opportunity to hear from his lordship many particulars both of Pope and Lord Bolingbroke, which I have in writing.

I proposed to Lord Marchmont, that he should revise Johnson's Life of Pope: "So," said his lordship, "you would put me in a dangerous situation. You know he knocked down Osborne, the bookseller [2]."

Elated with the success of my spontaneous exertion to procure material and respectable aid to Johnson for his very favourite work, "the Lives of the Poets," I hastened down to Mr. Thrale's, at Streatham, where he now was, that I might ensure his being at home next day; and after dinner when I thought he would receive the good news in the best humour, I announced it eagerly: "I have been at work for you today, sir. I have been with Lord Marchmont. He bade me tell you he has a great respect for you, and will call on you tomorrow at one o'clock, and communicate all he knows about Pope." Here I paused, in full expectation that he would be pleased with this intelligence, would praise my active merit, and would be alert to embrace such an offer from a nobleman. But whether I had shown an over-exultation, which provoked his spleen; or whether he was seized with a suspicion that I had obtruded him on Lord Marchmont, and humbled him too much; or whether there was any thing more than an unlucky fit of ill-humour, I know not; but to my surprise the result was,—JOHNSON. "I shall not be in town to-morrow. I do n't care to know about Pope." MRS. THRALE: (surprised as I was, and a little angry). "I suppose, sir, Mr. Boswell thought, that as you are to write Pope's Life, you would wish to know about him." JOHNSON. "Wish! why yes. If it raised knowledge, I 'd hold out my hand; but I would not give myself the trouble to go in quest of it.' There was no arguing with him at the moment. Some time afterwards he said, "Lord Marchmont will call on me, and then I shall call on Lord Marchmont." MRS. Thrale was uneasy at his unaccountable [3] caprice; and told me, that if I did not take care to bring about a meeting between Lord Marchmont and him, it would never take place, which would be a great pity. I sent a card to his lordship, to be left at Johnson's house, acquainting him, that Dr. Johnson could not be in town next day, but would do himself the honour of waiting on him at another time. I give this ac

[1] [Few words, however, of modern introduction have had greater success than this—for it is not only in general, but even in vulgar use. Johnson's awkward substitute of "*get abroad*" does not seem to express exactly the same meaning: a secret may *get abroad* by design, by accident, by breach of confidence; but it is said to *transpire* when it becomes known by small indirect circumstances—by symptoms—by inferences. It is now often used in the direct sense of "*get abroad*," but, as appears to the editor, incorrectly.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 61.—ED.]

[3] [Not quite so unaccountable as Mr. Boswell seems to think. *His* intervention in this affair, *unsolicited* and *unauthorized*, exhibits the bustling vanity of his own character, and Johnson very judiciously declined being dragged before Lord Marchmont by so headlong a master of the ceremonies.—ED.]

count fairly, as a specimen of that unhappy temper with which this great and good man had occasionally to struggle, from something morbid in his constitution. Let the most censorious of my readers suppose himself to have a violent fit of the toothache or to have received a severe stroke on the shinbone, and when in such a state to be asked a question; and if he has any candour, he will not be surprised at the answers which Johnson sometimes gave in moments of irritation, which, let me assure them is exquisitely painful. But it must not be erroneously supposed that he was, in the smallest degree, careless concerning any work which he undertook, or that he was generally thus peevish. It will be seen that in the following year he had a very agreeable interview with Lord Marchmont at his lordship's house; and this very afternoon he soon forgot any fretfulness, and fell into conversation as usual.

I mentioned a reflection having been thrown out against four peers[1] for having presumed to rise in opposition to the opinion of the twelve judges, in a cause in the house of lords, as if that were indecent. JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no ground for censure. The peers are judges themselves: and supposing them really to be of a different opinion, they might from duty be in opposition to the judges, who were there only to be consulted."

In this observation I fully concurred with him; for, unquestionably, all the peers are vested with the highest judicial powers; and when they are confident that they understand a cause, are not obliged, nay, ought not to acquiesce in the opinion of the ordinary law judges, or even in that of those who from their studies and experience are called the law lords. I consider the peers in general as I do a jury, who ought to listen with respectful attention to the sages of the law; but if, after hearing them, they have a firm opinion of their own, are bound, as honest men, to decide accordingly. Nor is it so difficult for them to understand even law questions as is generally thought, provided they will bestow sufficient attention upon them. This observation was made by my honoured relation the late Lord Cathcart, who had spent his life in camps and courts; yet assured me, that he could form a clear opinion upon most of the causes that came before the house of lords, "as they were so well enucleated in the Cases."

Mrs. Thrale told us, that a curious clergyman of our acquaintance had discovered a licentious stanza, which Pope had originally in his "Universal Prayer," before the stanza,

"What conscience dictates to be done
Or warns us not to do," &c.

It was this:

"Can sins of moment claim the rod
Of everlasting fires?
And that offend great Nature's God
Which Nature's self inspires?"

and that Dr. Johnson observed, "I had been borrowed from *Guarini*." There are, indeed, in *Pastor Fido*, many such flimsy superficial reasonings as that in the last two lines of this stanza.

BOSWELL. "In that stanza of Pope's '*rod of fires*' is certainly a bad metaphor." MRS. THRALE. "And '*sins of moment*' is a faulty expression; for its true import is *momentous*, which cannot be intended."

JOHNSON. "It must have been written '*of moments*.' Of *moment*, is *momentous*, of *moments*, *momentary*. I warrant you, however, Pope wrote this stanza, and some friend struck it out. Boileau wrote some such thing, and Arnaud struck it out, saying, '*Vous gagnerez deux ou trois impies, et perdrez je ne sçais combien d'honettes gens.*' These fellows want to say a daring thing, and don't know how to go about it. Mere poets know no more of fundamental principles than—." Here he was interrupted somehow. Mrs. Thrale mentioned Dryden. JOHNSON. "He puzzled himself about predestination. How foolish was it in Pope to give all his friendship to lords, who thought they honoured him by being with him; and to choose such lords as Burlington, and Cobham, and Bolingbroke! Bathurst was negative, a pleasing man; and I have heard no ill of Marchmont. And then always saying, 'I do not value you for being a lord;' which was a sure proof that he did. I never say I do not value Boswell more for being born to an estate, because I do not care." BOSWELL. "Nor for being a Scotchman?" "Nay, sir, I do value you more for being a Scotchman. You are a Scotchman without the faults of Scotchmen. You would not have been so valuable as you are had you not been a Scotchman."

Talking of divorces, I asked if Othello's doctrine was not plausible;

"He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
Let him not know 't, and he 's not robb'd at all."

Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale joined against this. JOHNSON. "Ask any man if he 'd wish not to know of such an injury." BOSWELL. "Would you tell your friend to make him unhappy?" JOHNSON. "Perhaps, sir, I should not; but that would be from prudence on my own account. A man would tell his father." BOSWELL. "Yes, because he would not have spurious children to get any share of the family inheritance." MRS. THRALE. "Or he would tell his

[1] [The occasion was Mr. Horne's writ of error in 1778.—ED.]

brother." BOSWELL. "Certainly his *elder* brother." JOHNSON. "You would tell your friend of a woman's infamy, to prevent his marrying a prostitute: there is the same reason to tell him of his wife's infidelity when he was married, to prevent the consequences of imposition. It is a breach of confidence not to tell a friend." BOSWELL. "Would you tell Mr. ———?" (naming a gentleman [1] who assuredly was not in the least danger of such a miserable disgrace, though married to a fine woman.) JOHNSON. "No, sir; because it would do no good: he is so sluggish, he 'd never go to parliament and get through a divorce."

He said of one [2] of our friends, "He is ruining himself without pleasure. A man who loses at play, or who runs out his fortune at court, makes his estate less, in hopes of making it bigger (I am sure of this word, which was often used by him): but it is a sad thing to pass through the quagmire of parsimony to the gulf of ruin. To pass over the flowery path of extravagance is very well."

Amongst the numerous prints pasted on the walls of the dining-room at Streatham was Hogarth's "Modern Midnight Conversation." I asked him what he knew of Parson Ford, who made a conspicuous figure in the riotous group. JOHNSON. "Sir, he was my acquaintance and relation, my mother's nephew. He had purchased a living in the country, but not simoniacally. I never saw him but in the country. I have been told he was a man of great parts; very profligate, but I never heard he was impious." BOSWELL. "Was there not a story of his ghost having appeared?" JOHNSON. "Sir, it was believed. A waiter at the Hummums, in which house Ford died, had been absent for some time, and returned, not knowing that Ford was dead. Going down to the cellar, according to the story, he met him; going down again, he met him a second time. When he came up, he asked some of the people of the house what Ford could be doing there. They told him Ford was dead. The waiter took a fever, in which he lay for some time. When he recovered, he said he had a message to deliver to some women from Ford; but he was not to tell what, or to whom. He walked out; he was followed; but somewhere about St. Paul's they lost him. He came back, and said he had delivered the message, and the women exclaimed, 'Then we are all undone!' Dr. Pellet, who was not a credulous man, inquired into the truth of this story, and he said the evidence was irresistible. My wife went to the Hummums; (it is a place where people get themselves cupped.) I believe she went with intention to hear about this story of Ford. At first they were unwilling to tell her; but, after they had talked to her, she came away satisfied that it was true. To be sure, the man had a fever; and this vision may have been the beginning of it. But if the message to the women, and their behaviour upon it, were true as related, there was something supernatural. That rests upon his word; and there it remains."

After Mrs. Thrale was gone to bed, Johnson and I sat up late. We resumed Sir Joshua Reynolds's argument on the preceding Sunday, that a man would be virtuous, though he had no other motive than to preserve his character. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not true; for, as to this world, vice does not hurt a man's character." BOSWELL. "Yes, sir, debauching a friend's wife will." JOHNSON. "No, sir. Who thinks the worse of ——[3] for it?" BOSWELL. "Lord ——[4] was not his friend." JOHNSON. "That is only a circumstance, sir; a slight distinction. He could not get into the house but by Lord ——[4]. A man is chose knight of the shire not the less for having debauched ladies." BOSWELL. "What, sir, if he debauched the ladies of gentlemen in the county, will not there be a general resentment against him?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. He will lose those particular gentlemen; but the rest will not trouble their heads about it" (warmly). BOSWELL. "Well, sir, I cannot think so." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, there is no talking with a man who will dispute what every body knows (angrily). Don't you know this?" BOSWELL. "No, sir; and I wish to think better of your country than you represent it. I knew in Scotland a gentleman obliged to leave it for debauching a lady; and in one of our counties an earl's brother lost his election because he had debauched the lady of another earl in that county, and destroyed the peace of a noble family."

Still he would not yield. He proceeded: "Will you not allow, sir, that vice does not hurt a man's character so as to obstruct his prosperity in life, when you know that ——[5] was loaded with wealth and honours? a man who had acquired his fortune by such crimes, that his consciousness of them impelled him to cut his own throat." BOSWELL. "You will recollect, sir, that Dr. Robertson said he cut his throat because he was weary of still life;

[1] [The editor declines to attempt supplying this name. He fears that it will be but too evident at whose expense Mr. Boswell chose to make so offensive an hypothesis.—ED.]

[2] [No doubt Mr. Langton.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Beauclerk. See *ante*, v. i. p. 316 *n*. —ED.]

[4] [Bolingbroke. See as above.—ED.]

[5] [Lord Clive. See *ante*, p. 185.—ED.]

little things not being sufficient to move his great mind." JOHNSON (very angry). "Nay, sir, what stuff is this? You had no more this opinion after Robertson said it than before. I know nothing more offensive than repeating what one knows to be foolish things, by way of continuing a dispute, to see what a man will answer,—to make him your butt!" (angrier still). BOSWELL. "My dear sir, I had no such intention as you seem to suspect; I had not, indeed. Might not this nobleman have felt every thing 'weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,' as Hamlet says?" JOHNSON. "Nay, if you are to bring in *gabble*, I 'll talk no more. I will not, upon my honour." My readers will decide upon this dispute.

Next morning I stated to Mrs. Thrale at breakfast, before he came down, the dispute of last night as to the influence of character upon success in life. She said he was certainly wrong; and told me that a baronet lost an election in Wales because he had debauched the sister of a gentleman in the county, whom he made one of his daughters invite as her companion at his seat in the country, when his lady and his other children were in London. But she would not encounter Johnson upon the subject.

I staid all this day with him at Streatham. He talked a great deal in very good humour.

Looking at Messrs. Dilly's splendid edition of Lord Chesterfield's miscellaneous works, he laughed, and said, "Here are now two speeches ascribed to him, both of which were written by me: and the best of it is, they have found out that one is like Demosthenes, and the other like Cicero [1]."

He censured Lord Kames's "Sketches of the History of Man," for misrepresenting Clarendon's account of the appearance of Sir George Villiers's ghost, as if Clarendon were weakly credulous; when the truth is, that Clarendon only says, that the story was upon a better foundation of credit than usually such discourses are founded upon; nay, speaks thus of the person who was reported to have seen the vision, "the poor man, *if he had been at all waking;*" which Lord Kames has omitted [2]. He added, "In this book it is maintained that virtue is natural to man, and that if we would but consult our own hearts, we should be virtuous. Now, after consulting our own hearts all we can, and with all the helps we have, we find how few of us are virtuous. This is saying a thing which all mankind know not to be true." BOSWELL. "Is not modesty natural?" JOHNSON. "I cannot say, sir, as we find no people quite in a state of nature; but, I think, the more they are taught, the more modest they are. The French are a gross, ill-bred, untaught people; a lady there will spit on the floor and rub it with her foot. What I gained by being in France was, learning to be better satisfied with my own country. Time may be employed to more advantage from nineteen to twenty-four, almost in any way than in travelling. When you set travelling against mere negation, against doing nothing, it is better to be sure; but how much more would a young man improve were he to study during those years. Indeed, if a young man is wild, and must run after women and bad company, it is better this should be done abroad, as, on his return, he can break off such connexions, and begin at home a new man, with a character to form, and acquaintance to make. How little does travelling supply to the conversation of any man who has travelled; how little to Beauclerk?" BOSWELL. "What say you to Lord ——— [3]?" JOHNSON "I never but once heard him talk of what he had seen, and that was of a large serpent in one of the pyramids of Egypt." BOSWELL. "Well, I happened to hear him tell the same thing, which made me mention him."

I talked of a country life. JOHNSON. "Were I to live in the country, I would not devote myself to the acquisition of popularity; I would live in a much better way, much more happily; I would have my time at my own command." BOSWELL. "But, sir, is it not a sad thing to be at a distance from all our literary friends?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you will by-and-by have enough of this conversation, which now delights you so much."

As he was a zealous friend of subordination, he was at all times watchful to repress the vulgar cant against the manners of the great. "High people, sir," said he, "are the best: take a hundred ladies of quality, you 'll find them better wives, better mothers, more willing to sacrifice their own pleasure to their children, than a hundred other women. Trades-women (I mean the wives of tradesmen) in the city, who are worth from ten to fifteen thousand pounds, are the worst creatures upon the earth, grossly ignorant, and thinking viciousness fashionable. Farmers, I think, are often worthless fellows. Few lords will cheat, and, if they do, they 'll be ashamed of it: farmers cheat, and are not ashamed of it: they have all the sensual vices too of the nobility, with cheating into the bargain.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 60.—ED.]

[2] [This suppression is particularly blameable, because the question was as to the extent of Clarendon's credulity. See also *ante*, p. 189.—ED.]

[3] [Charlemont. His lordship was in the habit of telling the story alluded to rather too often.—ED.]

There is as much fornication and adultery amongst farmers as amongst noblemen." BOSWELL. "The notion of the world, sir, however, is, that the morals of women of quality are worse than those in lower stations." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; the licentiousness of one woman of quality makes more noise than that of a number of women in lower stations: then, sir, you are to consider the malignity of women in the city against women of quality, which will make them believe any thing of them, such as that they call their coachmen to bed. No, sir; so far as I have observed, the higher in rank, the richer ladies are, they are the better instructed, and the more virtuous."

This year the Reverend Mr. Horne published his "Letter to Mr. Dunning on the English Particle." Johnson read it, and though not treated in it with sufficient respect, he had candour enough to say to Mr. Seward, "Were I to make a new edition of my Dictionary, I would adopt several[1] of Mr. Horne's etymologies. I hope they did not put the dog in the pillory for his libel: he has too much literature for that[2]."

On Saturday, May 16, I dined with him at Mr. Beauclerk's with Mr. Langton, Mr. Steevens, Dr. Higgins, and some others. I regret very feelingly every instance of my remissness in recording his *memorabilia;* I am afraid it is the condition of humanity (as Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, once observed to me, after having made an admirable speech in the house of commons, which was highly applauded, but which he afterwards perceived might have been better), "that we are more uneasy from thinking of our wants, than happy in thinking of our acquisitions." This is an unreasonable mode of disturbing our tranquillity, and should be corrected: let me then comfort myself with the large treasure of Johnson's conversation which I have preserved for my own enjoyment and that of the world, and let me exhibit what I have upon each occasion, whether more or less, whether a bulse, or only a few sparks of a diamond.

He said, "Dr. Mead lived more in the broad sunshine of life than almost any man."

The disaster of General Burgoyne's army[3] was then the common topick of conversation. It was asked why piling their arms was insisted upon as a matter of such consequence, when it seemed to be a circumstance so inconsiderable in itself. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a French authour says, '*Il y a beaucoup de puerilités dans la guerre.* All distinctions are trifles, because great things can seldom occur, and those distinctions are settled by custom. A savage would as willingly have his meat sent to him in the kitchen, as eat it at the table here: as men become civilised, various modes of denoting honourable preference are invented."

He this day made the observations upon the similarity between "Rasselas" and "Candide:" which I have inserted in its proper place, when considering his admirable philosophical romance. He said, "Candide" he thought had more power in it than any thing that Voltaire had written.

He said, "The lyrical part of Horace never can be perfectly translated; so much of the excellence is in the numbers and expression. Francis has done it the best; I'll take his, five out of six, against them all."

On Sunday, May 17, I presented to him Mr. Fullarton, of Fullarton, who has since distinguished himself so much in India, to whom he naturally talked of travels, as Mr. Brydone accompanied him in his tour to Sicily and Malta. He said, "The information which we have from modern travellers is much more authentick than what we had from ancient travellers: ancient travellers guessed; modern travellers measure. The Swiss admit that there is but one errour in Stanyan. If Brydone were more attentive to his Bible, he would be a good traveller."

He said, "Lord Chatham was a *Dictator;* he possessed the power of putting the state in motion; now there is no power, all order is relaxed." BOSWELL. "Is there no hope of a change to the better?" JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, when we are weary of this relaxation. So the city of London will appoint its mayors again by seniority." BOSWELL. "But is not that taking a mere chance for having a good or a bad mayor?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but the evil of competition is greater than that of the worst mayor that can come: besides, there is no more reason to suppose that the choice of a rabble will be right, than that chance will be right."

On Tuesday, May 19, I was to set out for Scotland in the evening. He was engaged to dine with me at Mr. Dilly's; I waited upon him to remind him of his appointment and attend him thither; he gave me some salutary counsel, and recommend-

[1] In Mr. Horne Tooke's enlargement of that "Letter," which he has since published with the title of "Επεα πτερoεντα, or, The Diversions of Purley," he mentions this compliment, as if Dr. Johnson, instead of *several* of his etymologies, had said *all* His recollection having thus magnified it, shows how ambitious he was of the approbation of so great a man.—BOSWELL.

[2] [See *ante*, p. 178. The editor cannot account for Johnson's ignorance of the sentence—any more than for the inconsistency between the wishes expressed in this and the former passage. —ED.]

[3] [Its surrender at Saratoga, October 17, 1777.—ED.]

ed vigorous resolution against any deviation from moral duty. BOSWELL. "But you would not have me to bind myself by a solemn obligation?" JOHNSON (much agitated). "What! a vow!—O, no, sir, a vow is a horrible thing! it is a snare for sin. The man who cannot go to heaven without a vow, may go—[1]." Here, standing erect in the middle of his library, and rolling grand, his pause was truly a curious compound of the solemn and the ludicrous: he half-whistled in his usual way when pleasant, and he paused as if checked by religious awe. Methought he would have added, to hell, but was restrained. I humoured the dilemma. "What, sir!" said I,

"'*In cœlum jusseris ibit?*'"—JUV. 3 Sat.

alluding to his imitation of it,

"And bid him go to hell, to hell he goes."

I had mentioned to him a slight fault in his noble "Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal," a too near recurrence of the verb *spread* in his description of the young enthusiast at college:

"Through all his veins the fever of renown
Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown;
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours *spread*,
And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head."

He had desired me to change *spreads* to *burns;* but for perfect authenticity, I now had it done with his own hand [2]. I thought this alteration not only cured the fault, but was more poetical, as it might carry an allusion to the shirt by which Hercules was inflamed.

We had a quiet, comfortable meeting at Mr. Dilly's; nobody there but ourselves. Mr. Dilly mentioned somebody having wished that Milton's "Tractate on Education" should be printed along with his Poems in the edition of the English Poets then going on. JOHNSON. "It would be breaking in upon the plan; but would be of no great consequence. So far as it would be any thing, it would be wrong. Education in England has been in danger of being hurt by two of its greatest men, Milton and Locke. Milton's plan is impracticable, and I suppose has never been tried. Locke's, I fancy, has been tried often enough, but is very imperfect; it gives too much to one side, and too little to the other; it gives too little to literature.—I shall do what I can for Dr. Watts; but my materials are very scanty. His poems are by no means his best works; I cannot praise his poetry itself highly; but I can praise its design."

My illustrious friend and I parted with assurances of affectionate regard.

I wrote to him on the 25th of May, from Thorpe, in Yorkshire, one of the seats of Mr. Bosville, and gave him an account of my having passed a day at Lincoln, unexpectedly, and therefore without having any letters of introduction, but that I had been honoured with civilities from the Reverend Mr. Simpson, an acquaintance of his [3], and Captain Broadley, of the Lincolnshire militia; but more particularly from the Reverend Dr. Gordon, the chancellor, who first received me with great politeness as a stranger, and, when I informed him who I was, entertained me at his house with the most flattering attention: I also expressed the pleasure with which I had found that our worthy friend, Langton, was highly esteemed in his own county town.

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 18th June, 1778.

"MY DEAR SIR,

* * * * * * *

"Since my return to Scotland, I have been again at Lanark, and have had more conversation with Thomson's sister. It is strange that Murdoch, who was his intimate friend, should have mistaken his mother's maiden name, which he says was Hume, whereas Hume was the name of his grandmother by the mother's side. His mother's name was Beatrix Trotter [4], a daughter of Mr. Trotter of Fogo, a small proprietor of land. Thomson had one brother, whom he had with him in England as his amanuensis; but he was seized with a consumption, and having returned to Scotland, to try what his native air would do for him, died young. He had three sisters; one married to Mr. Bell, minister of the parish of Strathaven, one to Mr. Craig, father of the ingenious architect, who gave the plan of the New Town of Edinburgh, and one to Mr. Thomson, master of the grammar-school at Lanark. He was of a humane and benevolent disposition; not only sent valuable presents to his sisters, but a yearly allowance in money, and was always wishing to have it in his power to do them more good. Lord Lyttelton's observation, that 'he loathed much to write,' was very true. His letters to his sister, Mrs. Thomson, were not frequent, and in one of them he says, 'All my friends who know me, know how backward I am to

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 234.—ED.]

[2] The slip of paper on which he made the correction is deposited by me in the noble library to which it relates, and to which I have presented other pieces of his handwriting.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Probably brother of the gentleman to whom he addressed the letter, *ante*, vol. i p. 150, and vol. ii. p. 59.—ED.]

[4] Dr. Johnson was by no means attentive to minute accuracy in his "Lives of the Poets;" for, notwithstanding my having detected this mistake, he continued it.—BOSWELL.

write letters; and never impute the negligence of my hand to the coldness of my heart.' I send you a copy of the last letter which she had from him; she never heard that he had any intention of going into holy orders. From this late interview with his sister, I think much more favourably of him, as I hope you will. I am eager to see more of your Prefaces to the Poets: I solace myself with the few proof-sheets which I have.

"I send another parcel of Lord Hailes's 'Annals,' which you will please to return to me as soon as you conveniently can. He says, 'he wishes you would cut a little deeper;' but he may be proud that there is so little occasion to use the critical knife. I ever am, my dear sir, your faithful and affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 3d July, 1778.

"SIR,—I have received two letters from you, of which the second complains of the neglect shown to the first. You must not tie your friends to such punctual correspondence. You have all possible assurances of my affection and esteem; and there ought to be no need of reiterated professions. When it may happen that I can give you either counsel or comfort, I hope it will never happen to me that I should neglect you but you must not think me criminal or cold, if I say nothing when I have nothing to say.

"You are now happy enough. Mrs. Boswell is recovered; and I congratulate you upon the probability of her long life. If general approbation will add any thing to your enjoyment, I can tell you that I have heard you mentioned as *a man whom every body likes*. I think life has little more to give.

"——[1] has gone to his regiment. He has laid down his coach, and talks of making more contractions of his expense: how he will succeed, I know not. It is difficult to reform a household gradually; it may be done better by a system totally new. I am afraid he has always something to hide. When we pressed him to go to ——[2], he objected the necessity of attending his navigation[3]; yet he could talk of going to Aberdeen[4], a place not much nearer his navigation. I believe he cannot bear the thought of living at —— in a state of diminution; and of appearing among the gentlemen of the neighbourhood *shorn of his beams*. This is natural, but it is cowardly. What I told him of the increasing expense of a growing family, seems to have struck him. He certainly had gone on with very confused views, and we have, I think, shown him that he is wrong; though, with the common deficience of advisers, we have not shown him how to do right.

"I wish you would a little correct or restrain your imagination, and imagine that happiness, such as life admits, may be had at other places as well as London. Without affecting[5] Stoicism, it may be said, that it is our business to exempt ourselves as much as we can from the power of external things. There is but one solid basis of happiness; and that is, the reasonable hope of a happy futurity. This may be had everywhere.

"I do not blame your preference to London to other places, for it is really to be preferred, if the choice is free; but few have the choice of their place, or their manner of life; and mere pleasure ought not to be the prime motive of action.

"Mrs. Thrale, poor thing, has a daughter. Mr. Thrale dislikes the times, like the rest of us. Mrs. Williams is sick; Mrs. Desmoulins is poor. I have miserable nights. Nobody is well but Mr. Levett. I am, dear sir, your most, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Langton has been pleased, at my request, to favour me with some particulars of Dr. Johnson's visit to Warley-camp, where this gentleman was at the time stationed as a captain in the Lincolnshire militia. I shall give them in his own words in a letter to me.

"It was in the summer of the year 1778, that he complied with my invitation to come down to the camp at Warley, and he staid with me about a week; the scene appeared, notwithstanding a great degree of ill health that he seemed to labour under, to interest and amuse him, as agreeing with the disposition that I believe you know he constantly manifested towards inquiring into subjects of the military kind. He sate, with a patient degree of attention, to observe the proceedings of a regimental court-martial, that happened to be called in the time of his stay with us; and one night, as late as at eleven o'clock, he accompanied the major of the regiment in going what are styled the *rounds*, where he might observe the forms of visiting the guards, for the seeing that they and their sentries are ready in their duty on their several posts He took occasion to converse at times on military topics, once in particular, that I see the mention of, in your 'Journal of a

[1] [Langton.—ED.] [2] [Langton.—ED.]

[3] ['The Wey canal, from Guildford to Weybridge, in which he had a considerable share, which his grandson now possesses.—ED.]

[4] [His lady and family, it appears, were in Scotland at this period.—ED.]

[5] [In former editions "*asserting*"—emended by Mr. Malone.—ED.]

Tour to the Hebrides,' which lies open before me [1], as to gunpowder; which he spoke of to the same effect, in part, that you relate.

"On one occasion, when the regiment were going through their exercise, he went quite close to the men at one of the extremities of it, and watched all their practices attentively; and, when he came away, his remark was, 'The men indeed do load their musquets and fire with wonderful celerity.' He was likewise particular in requiring to know what was the weight of the musket balls in use, and within what distance they might be expected to take effect when fired off.

"In walking among the tents, and observing the difference between those of the officers and private men, he said, that the superiority of accommodation of the better conditions of life, to that of the inferior ones, was never exhibited to him in so distinct a view. The civilities paid to him in the camp were, from the gentlemen of the Lincolnshire regiment, one of the officers of which accommodated him with a tent in which he slept; and from General Hall, who very courteously invited him to dine with him, where he appeared to be very well pleased with his entertainment, and the civilities he received on the part of the General [2]; the attention likewise of the General's aid-de-camp, Captain Smith, seemed to be very welcome to him, as appeared by their engaging in a great deal of discourse together. The gentlemen of the East-York regiment likewise, on being informed of his coming, solicited his company at dinner, but by that time he had fixed his departure, so that he could not comply with the invitation."

In the course of this year there was a difference between him and his friend Mr. Strahan; the particulars of which it is unnecessary to relate. Their reconciliation was communicated to me in a letter from Mr. Strahan in the following words:

"The notes I showed you that past between him and me were dated in March last. The matter lay dormant till 27th July, when he wrote to me as follows:

'TO WILLIAM STRAHAN, ESQ.

'SIR,—It would be very foolish for us to continue strangers any longer. You can never by persistency make wrong right. If I resented too acrimoniously, I resented only to yourself. Nobody ever saw or heard what I wrote. You saw that my anger was over, for in a day or two I came to your house. I have given you a longer time; and I hope you have made so good use of it, as to be no longer on evil terms with, sir, your, &c.

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

"On this I called upon him: and he has since dined with me."

After this time the same friendship as formerly continued between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Strahan. My friend mentioned to me a little circumstance of his attention, which, though we may smile at it, must be allowed to have its foundation in a nice and true knowledge of human life. "When I write to Scotland (said he), I employ Strahan to frank my letters, that he may have the consequence of appearing a parliament man among his countrymen."

["TO MRS. THRALE

"15th October, 1778.

"As to Dr. Collier's [3] epitaph, Nollekens has had it so long, that I have forgotten how long. You never had it. Lett vol. ii p. 20.

"There is a print of Mrs. Montague, and I shall think myself very ill rewarded for my love and admiration if she does not give me one; she will give it nobody in whom it will excite more respectful sentiments. But I never could get any thing from her but by pushing a face; and so, if you please, you may tell her.

* * * * * *

"When I called the other day at Burney's, I found only the young ones at home; at last came the doctor and madam, from a dinner in the country, to tell how they had been robbed as they returned. The doctor saved his purse, but gave them three guineas and some silver, of which they returned him three-and-sixpence, unasked, to pay the turnpike.

"I have sat twice to Joshua, and he seems to like his own performance. He has projected another, in which I am to be busy; but we can think on it at leisure.

"Mrs. Williams is come home better, and the habitation is all concord and harmony; only Mr. Levett harbours discontent.

"With Dr. Lawrence's consent, I have, for the two last nights, taken musk: the first night was a worse night than common, the second, a better: but not so much better as that I dare ascribe any virtue to the medicine. I took a scruple each time

[1] [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 363.—BOSWELL.]

[2] When I one day at court expressed to General Hall my sense of the honour he had done my friend, he politely answered, "Sir, I did *myself* honour."—BOSWELL.

[3] [Dr. Collier, of the Commons, an early friend of Mrs. Thrale's, who died 28d May 1777. —ED.]

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"31st October, 1778.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 27. "Sir Joshua has finished my picture, and it seems to please every body, but I shall wait to see how it pleases you.

* * * * * *

"To-day Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins had a scold, and Willams was going away; but I bid her *not turn tail*, and she came back, and rather got the upper hand."]

We surely cannot but admire the benevolent exertions of this great and good man, especially when we consider how grievously he was afflicted with bad health, and how uncomfortable his home was made by the perpetual jarring of those whom he charitably accommodated under his roof. He has sometimes suffered me to talk jocularly of his group of females, and call them his *Seraglio*. He thus mentions them, together with honest Levett, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale; "Williams hates every body; Levett hates Desmoulins, and does not love Williams; Desmoulins hates them both; Poll[1] loves none of them."

Hawk. p. 408. [These connexions exposed him to trouble and incessant solicitation, which he bore well enough; but his inmates were enemies to his peace, and occasioned him great disquiet: the jealousy that subsisted among them rendered his dwelling irksome to him, and he seldom approached it, after an evening's conversation abroad, but with the dread of finding it a scene of discord, and of having his ears filled with the complaints of Mrs. Williams of Frank's neglect of his duty and inattention to the interests of his master, and of Frank against Mrs. Williams, for the authority she assumed over him, and exercised with an unwarrantable severity. Even those intruders who had taken shelter under his roof, and who, in his absence from home, brought thither their children, found cause to murmur; "their provision of food was scanty, or their dinners ill dressed;" all which he chose to endure rather than put an end to their clamours by ridding his home of such thankless and troublesome guests. Nay, so insensible was he of the ingratitude of those whom he suffered thus to hang upon him, and among whom he may be said to have divided an income which was little more than sufficient for his own support, that he would submit to reproach and personal affront from some of them; even Levett would sometimes insult him, and Mrs. Williams, in her paroxysms of rage, has been known to drive him from her presence.]

"TO CAPTAIN LANGTON[2], WARLEY-CAMP.

"31st October, 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—When I recollect how long ago I was received with so much kindness at Warley common, I am ashamed that I have not made some inquiries after my friends.

"Pray how many sheep-stealers did you convict? and how did you punish them? When are you to be cantoned in better habitations? The air grows cold, and the ground damp. Longer stay in the camp cannot be without much danger to the health of the common men, if even the officers can escape.

"You see that Dr. Percy is now dean of Carlisle; about five hundred a year, with a power of presenting himself to some good living. He is provided for.

"The session of the Club is to commence with that of the parliament. Mr. Banks[3] desires to be admitted; he will be a very honourable accession.

"Did the king please you[4]? The Coxheath men, I think, have some reason to complain[5]. Reynolds says your camp is better than theirs.

"I hope you find yourself able to encounter this weather. Take care of your own health; and, as you can, of your men. Be pleased to make my compliments to all the gentlemen whose notice I have had, and whose kindness I have experienced. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote to him on the 18th of August, the 18th of September, and the 6th of November; informing him of my having had another son born, whom I had called James[6], that I had passed some time at Auchinleck; that the Countess of Loudoun, now in her

[1] Miss Carmichael.—BOSWELL. [The editor has not learned how this lady was connected with Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

[2] Dr. Johnson here addresses his worthy friend, Bennet Langton, Esq. by his title as captain of the Lincolnshire militia, in which he has since been most deservedly raised to the rank of major. —BOSWELL.

[3] [Afterwards Sir Joseph.—ED.]

[4] [His majesty and the queen visited Warley Camp on the 20th October.—ED.]

[5] [Of the King's not visiting that camp as well as Warley, which, however, he did, on the 3d November.—ED.]

[6] [This was the gentleman who contributed a few notes to this work. He was of Brazenose College, and a Vinerian Fellow, and died in February, 1822, at his chambers, in the Temple.—HALL. The editor had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He published an edition of Shakspeare; was very convivial; and in other respects like his father, though altogether on a smaller scale.—ED.]

ninety ninth year, was as fresh as when he saw her, and remembered him with respect; and that his mother by adoption, the Countess of Eglintoune, had said to me, "Tell Mr. Johnson, I love him exceedingly;" that I had again suffered much from bad spirits; and that as it was very long since I heard from him, I was not a little uneasy.

The continuance of his regard for his friend, Dr. Burney, appears from the following letters:

"TO THE REVEREND DR. WHEELER, OXFORD.

"London, 2d November, 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—Dr. Burney, who brings this paper, is engaged in a History of Musick; and having been told by Dr. Markham of some MSS. relating to his subject, which are in the library of your college, is desirous to examine them. He is my friend; and therefore I take the liberty of entreating your favour and assistance in his inquiry; and can assure you, with great confidence, that if you knew him he would not want any intervenient solicitation to obtain the kindness of one who loves learning and virtue as you love them

"I have been flattering myself all the summer with the hope of paying my annual visit to my friends; but something has obstructed me: I still hope not to be long without seeing you. I should be glad of a little literary talk; and glad to show you, by the frequency of my visits, how eagerly I love it, when you talk it. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND DR. EDWARDS [2], OXFORD.

"London, 2d November, 1778.

"SIR,—The bearer, Dr. Burney, has had some account of a Welsh manuscript in the Bodleian library, from which he hopes to gain some materials for his History of Musick; but being ignorant of the language, is at a loss where to find assistance. I make no doubt but you, sir, can help him through his difficulties, and therefore take the liberty of recommending him to your favour, as I am sure you will find him a man worthy of every civility that can be shown, and every benefit that can be conferred

"But we must not let Welsh drive us from Greek. What comes of Xenophon [3]? If you do not like the trouble of publishing the book, do not let your commentaries be lost; contrive that they may be published somewhere. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

These letters procured Dr. Burney great kindness and friendly offices from both of these gentlemen, not only on that occasion, but in future visits to the university. The same year Dr. Johnson not only wrote to Joseph Warton in favour of Dr. Burney's youngest son, who was to be placed in the college of Winchester, but accompanied him when he went thither.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"21st November, 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—It is indeed a long time since I wrote, and I think you have some reason to complain; however, you must not let small things disturb you, when you have such a fine addition to your happiness as a new boy, and I hope your lady's health restored by bringing him. It seems very probable that a little care will now restore her, if any remains of her complaints are left.

"You seem, if I understand your letter, to be gaining ground at Auchinleck, an incident that would give me great delight.

* * * * * *

"When any fit of anxiety, or gloominess, or perversion of mind lays hold upon you, make it a rule not to publish it by complaints, but exert your whole care to hide it; by endeavouring to hide it, you will drive it away. Be always busy.

"The Club is to meet with the parliament; we talk of electing Banks, the traveller; he will be a reputable member.

"Langton has been encamped with his company of militia on Warley-common; I spent five days amongst them; he signalised himself as a diligent officer, and has very high respect in the regiment. He presided when I was there at a court-martial; he is now quartered in Hertfordshire; his lady and little ones are in Scotland. Paoli came to the camp, and commended the soldiers.

"Of myself I have no great matters to say: my health is not restored; my nights are restless and tedious. The best night that I have had these twenty years was at Fort-Augustus.

"I hope soon to send you a few lives to read. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] [Benjamin Wheeler was entered at Trinity College, November 12, 1751, at the age of eighteen. Having taken the degree of M. A. from that house in 1758, he removed to Magdalen College, where he became B. D. 1769, and D. D. the year following. In 1776 he was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, in which he was succeeded by Dr. Randolph, late Bishop of London, in 1783.—HALL.]

[2] [Edward Edwards entered at Jesus College 1743, æt. 17; M. A. 1749; B. D. 1756; and D. D. 1760.—HALL.]

[3] [Dr. Edwards was preparing an edition of Xenophon's Memorabilia, which, however, he did not live to publish.—EDD.]

About this time the Reverend Mr. John Hussey, who had been some time in trade, and was then a clergyman of the church of England, being about to undertake a journey to Aleppo, and other parts of the east, which he accomplished, Dr. Johnson (who had long been in habits of intimacy with him) honoured him with the following letter:

"TO MR. JOHN HUSSEY.

"29th December, 1778.

"DEAR SIR,—I have sent you the 'Grammar,' and have left you two books more, by which I hope to be remembered: write my name in them; we may, perhaps, see each other no more; you part with my good wishes, nor do I despair of seeing you return. Let no opportunities of vice corrupt you; let no bad example seduce you; let the blindness of Mahometans confirm you in Christianity. God bless you. I am, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson this year expressed great satisfaction at the publication of the first volume of "Discourses to the Royal Academy," by Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom he always considered as one of his literary school. Much praise indeed is due to those excellent Discourses, which are so universally admired, and for which the authour received from the Empress of Russia a gold snuff-box, adorned with her profile in *bas relief*, set in diamonds; and containing, what is infinitely more valuable, a slip of paper, on which are written with her imperial majesty's own hand, the following words: "*Pour le Chevalier Reynolds, en temoignage du contentement que j'ai ressentie à la lecture de ses excellens discours sur la peinture.*"

This year Johnson gave the world a luminous proof that the vigour of his mind in all its faculties, whether memory, judgment, or imagination, was not in the least abated; for this year came out the first four volumes of his "Prefaces, biographical and critical, to the most eminent of the English Poets,*" published by the booksellers of London. The remaining volumes came out in the year 1780. The poets were selected by the several booksellers who had the honorary copyright, which is still preserved among them by mutual compact, notwithstanding the decision of the house of lords against the perpetuity of literary property. We have his own authority[1], that by his recommendation the poems of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden, were added to the collection. Of this work I shall speak more particularly hereafter.

[1] Life of Watts.—BOSWELL.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. ASTON.

"London, Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 2d Jan. 1779

"DEAR MADAM,—Now the new year is come, of which I wish you and dear Mrs. Gastrell many and many returns, it is fit that I give you some account of the year past. In the beginning of it I had a difficulty of breathing, and other illness, from which, however, I by degrees recovered, and from which I am now tolerably free. In the spring and summer I flattered myself that I should come to Lichfield, and forbore to write till I could tell of my intentions with some certainty, and one thing or other making the journey always improper, as I did not come, I omitted to write, till at last I grew afraid of hearing ill news. But the other day Mr. Prujean[2] called and left word, that you, dear madam, are grown better; and I know not when I heard any thing that pleased me so much. I shall now long more and more to see Lichfield, and partake the happiness of your recovery. Pemb. MS.

"Now you begin to mend, you have great encouragement to take care of your self. Do not omit any thing that can conduce to your health, and when I come, I shall hope to enjoy with you, and dearest Mrs. Gastrell, many pleasing hours.

"Do not be angry at my long omission to write, but let me hear how you both do, for you will write to nobody, to whom your welfare will give more pleasure, than to, dearest madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 2d Jan. 1779.

"DEAREST LOVE,—Though I have so long omitted to write, I will omit it no longer. I hope the new year finds you not worse than you have formerly been; and I wish that many years may pass over you without bringing either pain or discontent. For my part, I think my health, though not good, yet rather better than when I left you. Pearson MSS.

"My purpose was to have paid you my annual visit in the summer, but it happened otherwise, not by any journey another way, for I have never been many miles from London, but by such hindrances as it is hard to bring to any account.

"Do not follow my bad example, but write to me soon again, and let me know of you what you have to tell; I hope it is all good.

"Please to make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb, Mrs. Adey, and Miss Adey, and all the ladies and gentlemen that frequent your mansion.

[2] [Mr. Prujean married the youngest of the Misses Aston.—HARWOOD.]

"If you want any books, or any thing else that I can send you, let me know. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

On the 22d of January, I wrote to him on several topicks, and mentioned that as he had been so good as to permit me to have the proof sheets of his "Lives of the Poets," I had written to his servant, Francis, to take care of them for me.

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 2d February, 1779.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Garrick's death is a striking event; not that we should be surprised with the death of any man, who has lived sixty-two years [1]; but because there was a *vivacity* in our late celebrated friend, which drove away the thoughts of *death* from any association with *him*. I am sure you will be tenderly affected with his departure; and I would wish to hear from you upon the subject. I was obliged to him in my days of effervescence in London, when poor Derrick was my governour; and since that time I received many civilities from him. Do you remember how pleasing it was, when I received a letter from him at Inverary, upon our first return to civilized living after our Hebridean journey? I shall always remember him with affection as well as admiration.

"On Saturday last, being the 30th of January, I drank coffee and old port, and had solemn conversation with the Reverend Mr. Falconer, a nonjuring bishop, a very learned and worthy man. He gave two toasts, which you will believe I drank with cordiality, Dr. Samuel Johnson and Flora Macdonald. I sat about four hours with him, and it was really as if I had been living in the last century. The episcopal church of Scotland, though faithful to the royal house of Stuart, has never accepted of any *congé d'élire* since the revolution; it is the only true episcopal church in Scotland, as it has its own succession of bishops. For as to the episcopal clergy, who take the oaths to the present government, they indeed follow the rites of the church of England, but, as Bishop Falconer observed, 'they are not *episcopals;* for they are under no bishop, as a bishop cannot have authority beyond his diocese.' This venerable gentleman did me the honour to dine with me yesterday, and he laid his hands upon the heads of my little ones. We had a good deal of curious literary conversation, particularly about Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, with whom he lived in great friendship.

"Any fresh instance of the uncertainty of life makes one embrace more closely a valuable friend. My dear and much respected sir, may God preserve you long in this world while I am in it. I am ever, your much obliged, and affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

[When Garrick was on his last sick-bed, no arguments or recitals of such facts as reached him would persuade Dr. Johnson of his danger: he had prepossessed himself with a notion, that to say a man was sick, was very near wishing him so; and few things offended him more, than prognosticating even the death of an ordinary acquaintance. "Ay, ay," said he, "Swift knew the world pretty well, when he said, that, Piozzi, p. 145-6.

> Some dire misfortune to portend,
> No enemy can match a friend."

The danger then of Mr. Garrick, or of Mr. Thrale, whom he loved better, was an image which no one durst present before his view; he always persisted in the possibility and hope of their recovering disorders from which no human creatures by human means alone ever did recover. His distress for their loss was for that very reason poignant to excess: but his fears of his own salvation were excessive: his truly tolerant spirit, and Christian charity, which *hopeth all things*, and *believeth all things*, made him rely securely on the safety of his friends, while his earnest aspiration after a blessed immortality made him cautious of his own steps, and timorous concerning their consequences. He knew how much had been given, and filled his mind with fancies of how much would be required, till his impressed imagination was often disturbed by them, and his health suffered from the sensibility of his too tender conscience: a real Christian is *so* apt to find his task above his power of performance!]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS

"15th February, 1779.

"DEAREST MADAM,—I have never deserved to be treated as you treat me. When you employed me before, I undertook your affair [2] and succeeded, but then I succeeded by choosing a proper time, and a proper time I will try to choose again. Reyn. MS.

"I have about a week's work to do, and

[1] On Mr. Garrick's monument in Lichfield Cathedral, he is said to have died, "aged 64 years." But it is a mistake, and Mr. Boswell is perfectly correct. Garrick was baptised at Hereford, Feb. 28, 1716-17, and died at his house in London, Jan. 20, 1779. The inaccuracy of lapidary inscriptions is well known.—MALONE. [The inscription, as given in Harwood's *History of Lichfield*, has *sixty-three* years.—ED.]

[2] [This seems to allude to some favour (probably a pecuniary one) which Johnson was to solicit from Sir Joshua for Miss Reynolds.—ED.]

then I shall come to live in town, and will first wait on you in Dover-street. You are not to think that I neglect you, for your nieces will tell you how rarely they have seen me. I will wait on you as soon as I can, and yet you must resolve to talk things over without anger, and you must leave me to catch opportunities, and be assured, dearest dear, that I should have very little enjoyment of that day in which I had neglected any opportunity of doing good to you. I am, dearest madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

["TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.
"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 4th March, 1779.

"MY DEAR LOVE,—Since I heard from you, I sent you a little print, and two barrels of oysters, and I shall have some little books to send you soon. Pearson MS.

"I have seen Mr. Pearson, and am pleased to find that he has got a living. I was hurried when he was with me, but had time to hear that my friends were all well.

"Poor Mrs. Adey was, I think, a good woman, and therefore her death is less to be lamented; but it is not pleasant to think how uncertain it is, that, when friends part, they will ever meet again.

"My old complaint of flatulence, and tight and short breath, oppress me heavily. My nights are very restless. I think of consulting the doctor to-morrow.

"This has been a mild winter, for which I hope you have been the better. Take what care you can of yourself, and do not forget to drink. I was somehow or other hindered from coming into the country last summer, but I think of coming this year. I am, dear love, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."]

["TO MRS. ASTON.
"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 4th March, 1779.

"DEAR MADAM,—Mrs. Gastrell and you are very often in my thoughts, though I do not write so often as might be expected from so much love and so much respect. I please myself with thinking that I shall see you again, and shall find you better. But futurity is uncertain: poor David[1] had doubtless many futurities in his head, which death has intercepted—a death, I believe, totally unexpected: he did not in his last hour seem to think his life in danger. Pemb. MSS.

"My old complaints hang heavy on me, and my nights are very uncomfortable and unquiet; and sleepless nights make heavy days. I think to go to my physician, and try what can be done. For why should not I grow better as well as you?

"Now you are better, pray, dearest madam, take care of yourself. I hope to come this summer and watch you. It will be a very pleasant journey if I can find you and dear Mrs. Gastrell well.

"I sent you two barrels of oysters; if you would wish for more, please to send your commands to, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

["TO MRS. THRALE.
"10th March, 1779

"I will come to see you on Saturday, only let me know whether I must come to the Borough, or am to be taken up here. Letters vol. ii. p. 42

* * * * *

"I got my Lives, not yet quite printed, put neatly together, and sent them to the king: what he says of them I know not. If the king is a whig, he will not like them: but is any king a whig?"]

On the 23d of February I had written to him again, complaining of his silence, as I had heard he was ill, and had written to Mr. Thrale for information concerning him: and I announced my intention of soon being again in London.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
"13th March, 1779.

"DEAR SIR,—Why should you take such delight to make a bustle, to write to Mr. Thrale that I am negligent, and to Francis to do what is so very unnecessary? Thrale, you may be sure, cared not about it; and I shall spare Francis the trouble, by ordering a set both of the Lives and Poets to dear Mrs. Boswell[2], in acknowledgement of her marmalade. Persuade her to accept them, and accept them kindly. If I thought she would receive them scornfully, I would send them to Miss Boswell, who, I hope, has yet none of her mamma's ill-will to me.

"I would send sets of Lives, four volumes, to some other friends, to Lord Hailes first. His second volume lies by my bed-side; a book surely of great labour, and to every just thinker of great delight. Write me word to whom I shall send besides. Would it please Lord Auchinleck? Mrs. Thrale waits in the coach. I am, dear sir, &c.
"SAM. JOHNSON."

This letter crossed me on the road to London, where I arrived on Monday, March 15, and next morning, at a late hour, found Dr. Johnson sitting over his tea, attended by Mrs. Desmoulins, Mr. Levett, and a clergyman, who had come to

[1] [Mr. Garrick —ED.]

[2] He sent a set elegantly bound and gilt, which was received as a very handsome present.—BOSWELL.

submit some poetical pieces to his revision. It is wonderful what a number and variety of writers, some of them even unknown to him, prevailed on his good-nature to look over their works, and suggest corrections and improvements. My arrival interrupted, for a little while, the important business of this true representative of Bayes; upon its being resumed, I found that the subject under immediate consideration was a translation, yet in manuscript, of the "Carmen Seculare" of Horace, which had this year been set to musick, and performed as a publick entertainment in London, for the joint benefit of Monsieur Philidor and Signor Baretti. When Johnson had done reading, the authour asked him bluntly, "If upon the whole it was a good translation?" Johnson, whose regard for truth was uncommonly strict, seemed to be puzzled for a moment what answer to make, as he certainly could not honestly commend the performance: with exquisite address he evaded the question thus, "Sir, I do not say that it may not be made a very good translation." Here nothing whatever in favour of the performance was affirmed, and yet the writer was not shocked. A printed "Ode to the Warlike Genius of Britain" came next in review. The bard[1] was a lank bony figure, with short black hair; he was writhing himself in agitation, while Johnson read, and, showing his teeth in a grin of earnestness, exclaimed in broken sentences, and in a keen sharp tone, "Is that poetry, sir?—Is it Pindar?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, there is here a great deal of what is called poetry." Then, turning to me, the poet cried, "My muse has not been long upon the town, and (pointing to the Ode) it trembles under the hand of the great critick." Johnson, in a tone of displeasure, asked him, "Why do you praise Anson?" I did not trouble him by asking his reason for this question[2]. He proceeded:—"Here is an errour, sir; you have made Genius feminine." "Palpable, sir (cried the enthusiast); I know it. But (in a lower tone) it was to pay a compliment to the Duchess of Devonshire, with which her grace was pleased. She is walking across Coxheath[3] in the military uniform, and I suppose her to be the Genius of Britain." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are giving a reason for it; but that will not make it right. You may have a reason why two and two should make five; but they will still make but four."

Although I was several times with him in the course of the following days, such it seems were my occupations, or such my negligence, that I have preserved no memorial of his conversation till Friday, March 26, when I visited him. He said he expected to be attacked on account of his "Lives of the Poets." "However," said he, "I would rather be attacked than unnoticed. For the worst thing you can do to an authour is to be silent as to his works. An assault upon a town is a bad thing; but starving it is still worse; an assault may be unsuccessful, you may have more men killed than you kill; but if you starve the town, you are sure of victory."

[Dr. Johnson was famous for disregarding public abuse. When the people criticised and answered his pamphlets, papers, &c. he would say: "Why now, these fellows are only advertising my book: it is surely better a man should be abused than forgotten."] Piozzi, p. 140

Talking of a friend[4] of ours associating with persons of very discordant principles and characters; I said he was a very universal man, quite a man of the world. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but one may be so much a man of the world, as to be nothing in the world. I remember a passage in Goldsmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield,' which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge. 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing.'" BOSWELL. "That was a fine passage." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir there was another fine passage too, which he struck out: 'When I was a young man, being anxious to distinguish myself, I was perpetually starting new propositions. But I soon gave this over; for I found that generally what was new was false[5].'" I

[1] [This was a Mr. Tasker. Mr. D'Israeli informs the Editor, that this portrait is so accurately drawn, that, being, some years after the publication of this work, at a watering-place on the coast of Devon, he was visited by Mr. Tasker, whose name, however, he did not then know, but was so struck with his resemblance to Boswell's picture, that he asked him whether he had not had an interview with Dr. Johnson, and it appeared that he was indeed the authour of "The Warlike Genius of Britain."—ED.]

[2] [He disliked Lord Anson probably from local politics. On one occasion he visited Lord Anson's seat, and although, as he confessed, "well received and kindly treated, he, with the true gratitude of a wit, ridiculed the master of the house before he had left it half an hour." In the grounds there is a temple of the winds, on which he made the following epigram:

Gratum animum laudo; Qui debuit omnia ventis,
Quam bene ventorum, surgere templa jubet!—
Piozzi Anec. p. 55.—ED.]

[3] [Where there was a camp at this period; see *ante*, p. 199.—ED.]

[4] [Probably Sir Joshua Reynolds; see *ante*, p. 156.—ED.]

[5] Dr. Burney, in a note introduced in a former page, has mentioned this circumstance, concerning Goldsmith, as communicated to him by Dr. Johnson, not recollecting that it occurred here. His

said I did not like to sit with people of whom I had not a good opinion. JOHNSON. "But you must not indulge your delicacy too much, or you will be a *tête-à-tête* man all your life."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.
"18th March, 1779.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 43. "On Monday I came late to Mrs. Vesey. Mrs. Montagu was there; I called for the print[1], and got good words. The evening was not brilliant, but I had thanks for my company. The night was troublesome. On Tuesday I fasted, and went to the doctor: he ordered bleeding. On Wednesday I had the tea-pot, fasted, and was blooded. Wednesday night was better. To-day I have dined at Mr. Strahan's, at Islington, with his new wife. To-night there will be opium; to-morrow the tea-pot; then heigh for Saturday. I wish the doctor would bleed me again. Yet every body that I meet says that I look better than when I was last met."]

During my stay in London this spring, I find I was unaccountably negligent in preserving Johnson's sayings, more so than at any time when I was happy enough to have an opportunity of hearing his wisdom and wit. There is no help for it now. I must content myself with presenting such scraps as I have. But I am nevertheless ashamed and vexed to think how much has been lost. It is not that there was a bad crop this year, but that I was not sufficiently careful in gathering it in. I therefore, in some instances, can only exhibit a few detached fragments.

Talking of the wonderful concealment of the authour of the celebrated letters signed *Junius*, he said, "I should have believed Burke to be Junius, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these letters; but Burke spontaneously denied it to me. The case would have been different, had I asked him if he was the authour; a man so questioned, as to an anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it."

He observed that his old friend, Mr. Sheridan, had been honoured with extraordinary attention in his own country, by having had an exception made in his favour in an Irish act of parliament concerning insolvent debtors[2]. "Thus to be singled out," said he, "by a legislature, as an object of public consideration and kindness, is a proof of no common merit."

At Streatham, on Monday, March 29, at breakfast, he maintained that a father had no right to control the inclinations of his daughter in marriage. [Of parental authority, indeed, few people thought with a lower degree of estimation. Mrs. Thrale one day mentioned the resignation of Cyrus to his father's will, as related by Xenophon, when, after all his conquests, he requested the consent of Cambyses to his marriage with a neighbouring princess; and she added Rollin's applause and recommendation of the example. "Do you not perceive, then," says Johnson, "that Xenophon on this occasion commends like a pedant, and Pere Rollin applauds like a slave? If Cyrus, by his conquests, had not purchased emancipation, he had conquered to little purpose indeed. Can you forbear to see the folly of a fellow who has in his care the lives of thousands, when he begs his papa's permission to be married, and confesses his inability to decide in a matter which concerns no man's happiness but his own?" Dr. Johnson caught Mrs. Thrale another time reprimanding the daughter of her house-keeper for having sat down unpermitted in her mother's presence. "Why, she gets her living, does she not," said he, "without her mother's help? Let the wench alone," continued he. And when they were again out of the women's sight who were concerned in the dispute, "Poor people's children, dear lady," said he, "never respect them. I did not respect my own mother, though I loved her: and one day, when in anger, she called me a puppy, I asked her if she knew what they called a puppy's mother."] Piozzi, p. 20.

On Wednesday, 31st March, when I visited him, and confessed an excess of which I had very seldom been guilty—that I had spent a whole night in playing at cards, and that I could not look back on it with satisfaction—instead of a harsh animadversion, he mildly said, "Alas, sir, on how

remark, however, is not wholly superfluous, as it ascertains that the words which Goldsmith had put into the mouth of a fictitious character in the "Vicar of Wakefield," and which, as we learn from Dr. Johnson, he afterwards expunged, related, like many other passages in his novel, to himself. —MALONE.

[1] [Mrs. Montagu's portrait.—ED.]

[2] [This is a total mistake. Mr. Whyte tells us of the personal civility with which some members of a committee of the Irish house of commons on a bill for the relief of insolvent debtors treated Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Whyte who appeared on his behalf, but there is no exception in the act. Sheridan's name is one of some hundreds, and has no distinction whatsoever. The favour he sought was, to be included in the act without being in actual custody, as he was resident in France; this he obtained, but not specially, for one hundred and twenty other persons, in similar circumstances, are also included. See *Schedule to Irish Statute*, 5th Geo. 3d, chap. 23.—ED.]

few things can we look back with satisfaction!"

On Thursday, 1st April, he commended one of the Dukes of Devonshire for "a dogged veracity[1]." He said, too, "London is nothing to some people; but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where economy can be so well practised as in London: more can be had here for the money, even by ladies, than any where else. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a small place; you must make an uniform appearance. Here a lady may have well-furnished apartments, and elegant dress, without any meat in her kitchen."

I was amused by considering with how much ease and coolness he could write or talk to a friend, exhorting him not to suppose that happiness was not to be found as well in other places as in London; when he himself was at all times sensible of its being, comparatively speaking, a heaven upon earth. The truth is, that by those who from sagacity, attention, and experience, have learnt the full advantage of London, its pre-eminence over every other place, not only for variety of enjoyment, but for comfort, will be felt with a philosophical exultation. The freedom from remark and petty censure, with which life may be passed there, is a circumstance which a man who knows the teasing restraint of a narrow circle must relish highly. Mr. Burke, whose orderly and amiable domestick habits might make the eye of observation less irksome to him than to most men, said once very pleasantly, in my hearing, "Though I have the honour to represent Bristol, I should not like to live there; I should be obliged to be so much *upon my good behaviour*. In London, a man may live in splendid society at one time, and in frugal retirement at another, without animadversion. There, and there alone, a man's own house is truly his *castle*, in which he can be in perfect safety from intrusion whenever he pleases. I never shall forget how well this was expressed to me one day by Mr. Meynell: "The chief advantage of London," said he, "is, that a man is always *so near his burrow*."

He said of one of his old acquaintances[2], "He is very fit for a travelling governour. He knows French very well. He is a man of good principles; and there would be no danger that a young gentleman should catch his manner; for it is so very bad, that it must be avoided. In that respect he would be like the drunken Helot."

A gentleman has informed me, that Johnson said of the same person, "Sir, he has the most *inverted* understanding of any man whom I have ever known."

On Friday, 2d April, being Good-Friday, I visited him in the morning as usual; and finding that we insensibly fell into a train of ridicule upon the foibles of one of our friends, a very worthy man, I, by way of a check, quoted some good admonition from "The Government of the Tongue," that very pious book. It happened also remarkably enough, that the subject of the sermon preached to us to-day by Dr. Burrows, the rector of St. Clement Danes, was the certainty that at the last day we must give an account of "the deeds done in the body;" and amongst various acts of culpability he mentioned evil-speaking. As we were moving slowly along in the crowd from church, Johnson jogged my elbow and said, "Did you attend to the sermon?" "Yes, sir," said I; "it was very applicable to *us*." He, however, stood upon the defensive. "Why, sir, the sense of ridicule is given us, and may be lawfully used. The authour of 'The Government of the Tongue' would have us treat all men alike."

In the interval between morning and evening service, he endeavoured to employ himself earnestly in devotional exercise; and, as he has mentioned in his "Prayers and Meditations," gave me "*Les Pensées de Paschal*," that I might not interrupt him. I preserve the book with reverence. His presenting it to me is marked upon it with his own hand, and I have found in it a truly divine unction. We went to church again in the afternoon.

On Saturday, 3d April, I visited him at night, and found him sitting in Mrs. Williams's room, with her, and one who he afterwards told me was a natural son[3] of the second Lord Southwell. The table had a singular appearance, being covered with a heterogeneous assemblage of oysters and porter for his company, and tea for himself. I mentioned my having heard an eminent physician, who was himself a Christian, argue in favour of universal toleration, and maintain, that no man could be hurt by another man's differing from him in opinion. JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to a certain degree hurt by knowing that even one man does not believe."

[His annual review of his conduct appears to have been this year more detailed and severe than usual.] ED.

[April 2.—Good-Friday.—I am now to review the last year, and find little but dismal vacuity, nei- Pr. and Med. p. 171–175.

[1] See p. 126.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Probably Mr. Elphinstone, the schoolmaster of Kensington, and translator of Martial See *ante*, v. i. pp. 85, (*n.*) and 291.—ED.]

[3] Mr. Mauritius Lowe, a painter, in whose favour Johnson, some years afterwards, wrote a kind letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds.—MALONE.

ther business nor pleasure; much intended, and little done. My health is much broken; my nights afford me little rest. I have tried opium, but its help is counterbalanced with great disturbance; it prevents the spasms, but it hinders sleep. O God, have mercy on me.

Last week I published (the first part of) the Lives of the Poets, written, I hope, in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety.

In this last year I have made little acquisition; I have scarcely read any thing. I maintain Mrs. ———[1] and her daughter. Other good of myself I know not where to find, except a little charity.

But I am now in my seventieth year; what can be done, ought not to be delayed.

April 3, 1779, 11 P. M.—Easter-eve.—This is the time of my annual review, and annual resolution. The review is comfortless; little done. Part of the Life of Dryden and the Life of Milton have been written; but my mind has neither been improved nor enlarged. I have read little, almost nothing. And I am not conscious that I have gained any good, or quitted any evil habits.

April 4, 1779, Easter-day.—I rose about half an hour after nine, transcribed the prayer written last night; and by neglecting to count time sat too long at breakfast, so that I came to church at the first lesson. I attended the Litany pretty well; but in the pew could not hear the communion service, and missed the prayer for the church militant. Before I went to the altar, I prayed the occasional prayer. At the altar I commended my Θ Φ[2], and again prayed the prayer; I then prayed the collects, and again my own prayer by memory. I left out a clause. I then received, I hope with earnestness; and while others received sat down; but thinking that posture, though usual, improper, I rose and stood. I prayed again, in the pew, but with what prayer I have forgotten.

When I used the occasional prayer at the altar, I added a general purpose,—To avoid idleness.

I gave two shillings to the plate.

Before I went I used, I think, my prayer, and endeavoured to calm my mind. After my return I used it again, and the collect for the day. Lord, have mercy upon me.

I have for some nights called Francis to prayers, and last night discoursed with him on the sacrament.]

On Easter-day, after [the] solemn service at St. Paul's, [just described], I dined with him. Mr. Allen the printer was also his guest. He was uncommonly silent; and I have not written down any thing, except a single curious fact, which, having the sanction of his inflexible veracity, may be received as a striking instance of human insensibility and inconsideration. As he was passing by a fishmonger who was skinning an eel alive, he heard him "curse it, because it would not lie still."

On Wednesday, 7th April, I dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's. I have not marked what company was there. Johnson harangued upon the qualities of different liquors; and spoke with great contempt of claret, as so weak, that "a man would be drowned by it before it made him drunk." He was persuaded to drink one glass of it, that he might judge, not from recollection, which might be dim, but from immediate sensation. He shook his head, and said, "Poor stuff! No, sir, claret is the liquor for boys; port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling) must drink brandy. In the first place, the flavour of brandy is most grateful to the palate; and then brandy will do soonest for a man what drinking *can* do for him. There are, indeed, few who are able to drink brandy. That is a power rather to be wished for than attained. And yet," proceeded he, "as in all pleasure hope is a considerable part, I know not but fruition comes too quick by brandy. Florence wine I think the worst; it is wine only to the eye; it is wine neither while you are drinking it, nor after you have drunk it; it neither pleases the taste, nor exhilarates the spirits." I reminded him how heartily he and I used to drink wine together, when we were first acquainted; and how I used to have a headache after sitting up with him. He did not like to have this recalled, or, perhaps, thinking that I boasted improperly, resolved to have a witty stroke at me; "Nay, sir, it was not the *wine* that made your head ache, but the *sense* that I put into it." BOSWELL. "What, sir! will sense make the head ache?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir (with a smile), when it is not used to it." No man who has a true relish of pleasantry could be offended at this; especially if Johnson in a long intimacy had given him repeated proofs of his regard and good estimation. I used to say that as he had given me a thousand pounds in praise, he had a good right now and then to take a guinea from me.

On Thursday, 8th April, I dined with him at Mr. Allan Ramsay's, with Lord Graham[3] and some other company. We talked of Shakspeare's witches. JOHNSON.

[1] [No doubt Mrs. Desmoulins and her daughter. —ED.]

[2] [These letters (which Dr. Strahan seems not to have understood), probably mean Θνητοι Φιλοι, *departed friends*.—ED.]

[3] [The present [third] Duke of Montrose, born in 1755. He succeeded to the dukedom in 1790.—ED.]

"They are beings of his own creation; they are a compound of malignity and meanness, without any abilities; and are quite different from the Italian magician. King James says in his 'Dæmonology,' 'Magicians command the devils: witches are their servants.' The Italian magicians are elegant beings." RAMSAY. "Opera witches, not Drury-lane witches." Johnson observed, that abilities might be employed in a narrow sphere, as in getting money, which he said he believed no man could do without vigorous parts, though concentrated to a point. RAMSAY. "Yes, like a strong horse in a mill; he pulls better."

Lord Graham, while he praised the beauty of Lochlomond, on the banks of which is his family seat, complained of the climate, and said he could not bear it. JOHNSON. "Nay, my lord, do n't talk so: you may bear it well enough. Your ancestors have borne it more years than I can tell." This was a handsome compliment to the antiquity of the house of Montrose. His lordship told me afterwards that he had only affected to complain of the climate, lest, if he had spoken as favourably of his country as he really thought, Dr. Johnson might have attacked it. Johnson was very courteous to Lady Margaret Macdonald. "Madam," said he, "when I was in the Isle of Sky [1], I heard of the people running to take the stones off the road, lest Lady Margaret's horse should stumble."

Lord Graham commended Dr. Drummond at Naples as a man of extraordinary talents; and added, that he had a great love of liberty. JOHNSON. "He is *young* [2], my lord (looking to his lordship with an arch smile), all *boys* love liberty, till experience convinces them they are not so fit to govern themselves as they imagined. We are all agreed as to our own liberty; we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others: for in proportion as we take, others must lose. I believe we hardly wish that the mob should have liberty to govern us. When that was the case some time ago, no man was at liberty not to have candles in his windows." RAMSAY. "The result is, that order is better than confusion." JOHNSON. "The result is, that order cannot be had but by subordination."

On Friday, 16th April, I had been present at the trial of the unfortunate Mr. Hackman, who, in a fit of frantick jealous love, had shot Miss Ray, the favourite of a nobleman [3]. Johnson, in whose company I dined to-day with some other friends, was much interested by an account of what passed, and particularly with his prayer for the mercy of Heaven. He said, in a solemn fervid tone, "I hope he *shall* find mercy [4]."

This day a violent altercation arose between Johnson and Beauclerk, which having made much noise at the time, I think it proper, in order to prevent any future misrepresentation, to give a minute account of it.

In talking of Hackman, Johnson argued, as Judge Blackstone had done, that his being furnished with two pistols was a proof that he meant to shoot two persons. Mr. Beauclerk said, "No; for that every wise man who intended to shoot himself took two pistols, that he might be sure of doing it at once. Lord ———'s cook shot himself with one pistol, and lived ten days in great agony. Mr. ——— [5], who loved buttered muffins, but durst not eat them because they disagreed with his stomach, resolved to shoot himself; and then he ate three buttered muffins for breakfast, before shooting himself, knowing that he should not be troubled with indigestion; *he* had two charged pistols; one was found lying charged upon the table by him, after he had shot himself with the other."—"Well," said Johnson, with an air of triumph, "you see here one pistol was sufficient." Beauclerk replied smartly, "Because it happened to kill him." And either then or a very little afterwards, being piqued at Johnson's triumphant remark, added, "This is what you do n't know, and I do." There was then a cessation of the dispute; and some minutes intervened, during which, dinner and the glass went on cheerfully; when Johnson suddenly and abruptly exclaimed, "Mr. Beauclerk, how came you to talk so petulantly to me, as 'This is what you do n't know, but what I know?' One thing *I* know, which *you* do n't seem to know, that you are very uncivil." BEAUCLERK. "Because *you* began by being uncivil (which you always are)." The words in parentheses were, I believe, not heard by Dr. Johnson. Here again there was a cessation of arms. Johnson told me,

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 412.—ED.]

[2] [His lordship was twenty-four.—ED.]

[3] [John, sixth Earl of Sandwich.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 32, 33.—ED.]

[5] ["The Honourable [John Damer], son to the Lord [Milton, afterwards Earl of Dorchester], shot himself at three o'clock this morning, at the Bedford Arms, in Covent Garden. He was heir to 30,000*l.* a year, but of a turn rather too eccentric to be confined within the limits of any fortune. Coroner's verdict, *Lunacy*."—*Gent. Mag.* 15th Aug. 1776.—Though the editor was assured, from what he thought good authority, that Mr. Damer was here alluded to, he has since reason to suppose that another and more respectable name was meant, which, however, without more certainty, he does not venture to mention —ED.]

that the reason why he waited at first some time without taking any notice of what Mr. Beauclerk said, was because he was thinking whether he should resent it. But when he considered that there were present a young lord and an eminent traveller, two men of the world, with whom he had never dined before, he was apprehensive that they might think they had a right to take such liberties with him as Beauclerk did, and therefore resolved he would not let it pass; adding, "that he would not appear a coward." A little while after this, the conversation turned on the violence of Hackman's temper. Johnson then said, "It was his business to *command* his temper, as my friend, Mr. Beauclerk, should have done some time ago." BEAUCLERK. "I should learn of *you*, sir." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have given *me* opportunities enough of learning, when I have been in *your* company. No man loves to be treated with contempt." BEAUCLERK (with a polite inclination towards Johnson). "Sir, you have known me twenty years, and however I may have treated others, you may be sure I could never treat you with contempt." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have said more than was necessary." Thus it ended; and Beauclerk's coach not having come for him till very late, Dr. Johnson and another gentleman sat with him a long time after the rest of the company were gone; and he and I dined at Beauclerk's on the Saturday se'n night following.

After this tempest had subsided, I recollect the following particulars of his conversation:

"I am always for getting a boy forward in his learning; for that is a sure good. I would let him at first read *any* English book which happens to engage his attention; because you have done a great deal, when you have brought him to have entertainment from a book. He'll get better books afterwards."

Hawk. Apoph. p. 204 [I would never," said he, on another occasion, "desire a young man to neglect his business for the purpose of pursuing his studies, because it is unreasonable; I would only desire him to read at those hours when he would otherwise be unemployed. I will not promise that he will be a Bentley; but if he be a lad of any parts, he will certainly make a sensible man."]

Piozzi, p. 40, 41. [Dr. Johnson had never, by his own account, been a close student, and used to advise young people never to be without a book in their pocket, to be read at by-times when they had nothing else to do. "It has been by that means," said he one day to a boy at Mr. Thrale's, "that all my knowledge has been gained, except what I have picked up by running about the world with my wits ready to observe, and my tongue ready to talk. A man is seldom in a humour to unlock his book case, set his desk in order, and betake himself to serious study; but a retentive memory will do something, and a fellow shall have strange credit given him, if he can but recollect striking passages from different books, keep the authors separate in his head, and bring his stock of knowledge artfully into play: how else," added he, "do the gamesters manage when they play for more money than they are worth?" His Dictionary, however, could not, one would think, have been written by running up and down; but he really did not consider it as a great performance; and used to say, "That he might have done it easily in two years, had not his health received several shocks during the time."

When Mr. Thrale, in consequence of this declaration, teased him in the year 1769 to give a new edition of it, because, said he, there are four or five gross faults: "Alas, sir!" replied Johnson, "there are four or five hundred faults, instead of four or five; but you do not consider that it would take me up three whole months' labour, and when the time was expired the work would not be done." When the booksellers set him about it, however, some years after, he went cheerfully to the business, said he was well paid, and that they deserved to have it done carefully.]

"Mallet, I believe, never wrote a single line of his projected life of the Duke of Marlborough. He groped for materials, and thought of it, till he had exhausted his mind. Thus it sometimes happens that men entangle themselves in their own schemes."

"To be contradicted in order to force you to talk is mighty unpleasing. You *shine*, indeed; but it is by being *ground*."

Of a gentleman who made some figure among the literati of his time (Mr. Fitzherbert[1]), he said, "What eminence he had was by a felicity of manner: he had no more learning than what he could not help."

On Saturday, April 24, I dined with him at Mr. Beauclerk's, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Jones (afterwards Sir William), Mr. Langton, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Paradise and Dr. Higgins. I mentioned that Mr. Wilkes had attacked Garrick to me, as a man who had no friend. JOHNSON. "I believe he is right, sir. Οι, φιλοι, ου φιλος—He had friends, but no friend[2]. Garrick was so diffused, he had no man to whom he wished to unbosom himself. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that al

[1] [See *ante*, p. 109.—ED.]

[2] See vol. i. p. 83. and p. 168 of this vol. BOSWELL.

ways for the same thing: so he saw life with great uniformity." I took upon me, for once, to fight with Goliath's weapons, and play the sophist.—"Garrick did not need a friend, as he got from every body all he wanted. What is a friend? One who supports you and comforts you, while others do not. Friendship, you know, sir, is the cordial drop, 'to make the nauseous draught of life go down:' but if the draught be not nauseous, if it be all sweet, there is no occasion for that drop." JOHNSON. "Many men would not be content to live so. I hope I should not. They would wish to have an intimate friend, with whom they might compare minds, and cherish private virtues." One of the company mentioned Lord Chesterfield, as a man who had no friend. JOHNSON. "There were more materials to make friendship in Garrick, had he not been so diffused." BOSWELL. "Garrick was pure gold, but beat out to thin leaf. Lord Chesterfield was tinsel." JOHNSON. "Garrick was a very good man, the cheerfulest man of his age; a decent liver in a profession which is supposed to give indulgence to licentiousness; and a man who gave away freely money acquired by himself. He began the world with a great hunger for money; the son of a half-pay officer, bred in a family whose study was to make four-pence do as much as others made four-pence-halfpenny do. But when he had got money, he was very liberal." I presumed to animadvert on his eulogy on Garrick, in his "Lives of the Poets." "You say, sir, his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations." JOHNSON. "I could not have said more nor less. It is the truth; *eclipsed*, not *extinguished;* and his death *did* eclipse; it was like a storm." BOSWELL. "But why nations? Did his gaiety extend further than his own nation?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, some exaggeration must be allowed. Besides, nations may be said, if we allow the Scotch to be a nation, and to have gaiety—which they have not. *You* are an exception, though. Come, gentlemen, let us candidly admit that there is one Scotchman who is cheerful." BEAUCLERK. "But he is a very unnatural Scotchman." I, however, continued to think the compliment to Garrick hyperbolically untrue. His acting had ceased some time before his death; at any rate, he had acted in Ireland but a short time, at an early period of his life, and never in Scotland. I objected also to what appears an anti-climax of praise, when contrasted with the preceding panegyrick—"and diminished the publick stock of harmless pleasure!" "Is not *harmless pleasure* very tame?" JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, harmless pleasure is the highest praise. Pleasure is a word of dubious import; pleasure is in general dangerous, and pernicious to virtue; to be able therefore to furnish pleasure that is harmless, pleasure pure and unalloyed, is as great a power as man can possess." This was, perhaps, as ingenious a defence as could be made; still, however, I was not satisfied[1].

[To Sir J. Hawkins he said, "Garrick, I hear, complains that I am the only popular author of his time who has exhibited no praise of him in print; but he is mistaken, Akenside has forborne to mention him. Some indeed are lavish in their applause of all who come within the compass of their recollection, yet he who praises every body praises nobody; when both scales are equally loaded, neither can preponderate."] Hawk. Apoph. p. 215.

A celebrated wit[2] being mentioned, he said, "One may say of him as was said of a French wit, *Il n'a de l'esprit que contre Dieu.* I have been several times in company with him, but never perceived any strong power of wit. He produces a general effect by various means; he has a cheerful countenance and a gay voice. Besides, his trade is wit. It would be as wild in him to come into company without merriment, as for a highwayman to take the road without his pistols."

Talking of the effects of drinking, he said, "Drinking may be practised with great prudence; a man who exposes himself when he is intoxicated has not the art of getting drunk; a sober man who happens occasionally to get drunk, readily enough goes into a new company, which a man who has been drinking should never do. Such a man will undertake any thing; he is without skill in inebriation. I used to slink home when I had drunk too much. A man accustomed to self-examination will be conscious when he is drunk, though an habitual drunkard will not be conscious of it. I knew a physician, who for twenty years was not sober; yet in a pamphlet which he wrote upon fevers, he appealed to Garrick and me for his vindication from a charge of drunkenness. A bookseller[3]

[1] [Most readers will agree with Mr. Boswell that this eulogium is not very happily expressed; yet it appears to have been satisfactory to Garrick's immediate friends, for it is inscribed on the cenotaph erected by Mrs. Garrick to his memory in Lichfield Cathedral. *Harwood's History of Lichfield*, p. 86.—ED.]

[2] [It has been suggested to the editor that Mr. George Selwyn is here meant; but he cannot trace any acquaintance between Selwyn and Johnson.—ED.]

[3] [This was Andrew Miller, of whom, when talking one day of the patronage the great sometimes affect to give to literature and literary men, Johnson said, "Andrew Miller is the *Mæcenas* of the age."—*Hawk. Apoph.* p. 200.—ED.]

(naming him) who got a large fortune by trade was so habitually and equably drunk, that his most intimate friends never perceived that he was more sober at one time than another."

Talking of celebrated and successful irregular practisers in physick, he said, "Taylor[1] was the most ignorant man I ever knew, but sprightly; Ward, the dullest. Taylor challenged me once to talk Latin with him," laughing. "I quoted some of Horace, which he took to be a part of my own speech. He said a few words well enough." BEAUCLERK. "I remember, sir, you said, that Taylor was an instance how far impudence could carry ignorance." Mr. Beauclerk was very entertaining this day, and told us a number of short stories in a lively elegant manner, and with that air of *the world* which has I know not what impressive effect, as if there was something more than is expressed, or than perhaps we could perfectly understand. As Johnson and I accompanied Sir Joshua Reynolds in his coach, Johnson said, "There is in Beauclerk a predominance over his company, that one does not like. But he is a man who has lived so much in the world, that he has a short story on every occasion: he is always ready to talk, and is never exhausted."

Johnson and I passed the evening at Miss Reynolds's, Sir Joshua's sister. I mentioned that an eminent friend[2] of ours, talking of the common remark, that affection descends, said, that "this was wisely[3] contrived for the preservation of mankind; for which it was not so necessary that there should be affection from children to parents, as from parents to children; nay, there would be no harm in that view though children should at a certain age eat their parents." JOHNSON. "But, sir, if this were known generally to be the case, parents would not have affection for children." BOSWELL. "True, sir; for it is in expectation of a return that parents are so attentive to their children; and I know a very pretty instance of a little girl of whom her father was very fond, who once, when he was in a melancholy fit, and had gone to bed, persuaded him to rise in good humour by saying, 'My dear papa, please to get up, and let me help you on with your clothes, that I may learn to do it when you are an old man.'"

[1] The Chevalier Taylor, the celebrated oculist. —MALONE.

[2] [Probably Mr. Burke.—ED.]

[3] [Wisely and mercifully; *wisely* to ensure the preservation and education of children, and *mercifully* to render less afflictive the loss of parents, which, in the course of nature, children must suffer.—ED.]

Soon after this time a little incident occurred, which I will not suppress, because I am desirous that my work should be, as much as is consistent with the strictest truth, an antidote to the false and injurious notions of his character, which have been given by others, and therefore I infuse every drop of genuine sweetness into my biographical cup.

"TO DR. JOHNSON.

"South-Audley-street[4], Monday, 26th April.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am in great pain with an inflamed foot, and obliged to keep my bed, so am prevented from having the pleasure to dine at Mr. Ramsay's to-day, which is very hard; and my spirits are sadly sunk. Will you be so friendly as to come and sit an hour with me in the evening? I am ever your most faithful and affectionate humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO MR. BOSWELL

"Harley-street

"MR.[5] JOHNSON laments the absence of Mr. Boswell, and will come to him."

He came to me in the evening, and brought Sir Joshua Reynolds. I need scarcely say, that their conversation, while they sat by my bedside, was the most pleasing opiate to pain that could have been administered.

Johnson being now better disposed to obtain information concerning Pope than he was last year[6], sent by me to my Lord Marchmont a present of those volumes of his "Lives of the Poets" which were at this time published, with a request to have permission to wait on him; and his lordship, who had called on him twice, obligingly appointed Saturday, the first of May, for receiving us.

On that morning Johnson came to me from Streatham, and after drinking chocolate at General Paoli's in South-Audley-street, we proceeded to Lord Marchmont's in Curzon-street. His lordship met us at the door of his library, and with great politeness said to Johnson, "I am not going to make an encomium upon *myself*, by telling you the high respect I have for *you*, sir." Johnson was exceedingly courteous; and the interview, which lasted about two hours, during which the earl communicated his anecdotes of Pope, was as agreeable as I could have wished. [His first question, as he told Sir J. Hawkins, was, "What kind of a man was Mr. Pope in his conversation?" His

Hawk. Apopt. p. 200.

[4] [The residence of General Paoli.—ED.]

[5] [See, as to his calling himself *Mr.* Johnson, *ante*, vol. i. pp. 218, (*n.*) and 513.—ED.]

[6] See p. 191 of this volume.—BOSWELL.

ordship answered, "That if the conversation did not take something of a lively or epigrammatick turn, he fell asleep, or, perhaps, pretended to be so."] When we came out, I said to Johnson, "that, considering his lordship's civility, I should have been vexed if he had again failed to come." "Sir," said he, "I would rather have given twenty pounds than not to have come." I accompanied him to Streatham, where we dined, and returned to town in the evening.

On Monday, May 3, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's. I pressed him this day for his opinion on the passage in Parnell, concerning which I had in vain questioned him in several letters, and at length obtained it in *due form of law.*

"CASE FOR DR. JOHNSON'S OPINION;
"3d of May, 1779.

"Parnell, in his 'Hermit,' has the following passage:

'To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if *books* and *swains* report it right
(For yet by *swains alone* the world he knew,
Whose feet came wand'ring o'er the nightly dew).'

Is there not a contradiction in its being *first* supposed that the Hermit knew *both* what books and swains reported of the world; yet *afterwards* said, that he knew it by swains *alone*?"

"I think it an inaccuracy. He mentions two instructers in the first line, and says he had only one in the next[1]."

This evening I set out for Scotland.

["TO MRS. ASTON.
"4th May, 1779

"DEAR MADAM,—When I sent you the little books, I was not sure that you were well enough to take the trouble of reading them, but have lately heard from Mr. Greeves that you are much recovered. I hope you will gain more and more strength, and live many and many years, and I shall come again to Stowhill, and live as I used to do, with you and dear Mrs. Gastrel. Pemb. MSS.

"I am not well: my nights are very troublesome, and my breath is short; but I know not that it grows much worse. I wish to see you. Mrs. Harvey has just sent to me to dine with her, and I have promised to wait on her to-morrow

"Mr. Green comes home loaded with curiosities[2], and will be able to give his friends new entertainment. When I come, it will be great entertainment to me if I can find you and Mrs. Gastrel well, and willing to receive me. I am, dearest madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.
"4th May, 1779

"DEAR MADAM,—Mr. Green has informed me that you are much better; I hope I need not tell you that I am glad of it. I cannot boast of being much better; my old nocturnal complaint still pursues me, and my respiration is difficult, though much easier than when I left you the summer before last. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale are well; miss has been a little indisposed; but she is got well again. They have, since the loss of their boy, had two daughters; but they seem likely to want a son. Pearson. MS.

[1] "I do not," says Mr. Malone, "see any difficulty in this passage, and wonder that Dr. Johnson should have acknowledged it to be *inaccurate.* The Hermit, it should be observed, had no actual experience of the world whatsoever: all his knowledge concerning it had been obtained in two ways; from *books*, and from the *relations* of those country swains who had seen a little of it. The plain meaning, therefore, is, 'To clear his doubts concerning Providence, and to obtain some knowledge of the world by actual experience; to see whether the accounts furnished by books, or by the oral communications of swains, were just representations of it;' [I say *swains,*] for his oral or *vivâ voce* information had been obtained from that part of mankind *alone*, &c. The word *alone* here does not relate to the whole of the preceding line, as has been supposed, but, by a common license, to the words, *of all mankind*, which are understood, and of which it is restrictive." Mr. Malone, it must be owned, has shown much critical ingenuity in his explanation of this passage. His interpretation, however, seems to me much too recondite. The *meaning* of the passage may be certain enough; but surely the expression is confused, and one part of it contradictory to the other.—BOSWELL. But why *too recondite*? When a meaning is given to a passage by understanding words in an uncommon sense, the interpretation may be said to be *recondite*, and, however ingenious, may be suspected not to be sound; but when words are explained in their ordinary acceptation, and the explication which is fairly deduced from them, without any force or constraint, is also perfectly justified by the context, it surely may be safely accepted; and the calling such an explication *recondite*, when *nothing else can be said against it*, will not make it the less just.—MALONE. [It is odd enough that these critics did not think it worth their while to consult the original for the exact words on which they were exercising their ingenuity. Parnell's words are *not* "*if books* AND *swains*," but "*if books* OR *swains*," which *might* mean, not that books and swains *agreed*, but that they *differed*, and that the Hermit's doubt was excited by the difference between his authorities. This, however, would make no great alteration in the question, on which Dr. Johnson's decision seems just.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Green, it will be recollected, had a *museum* at Lichfield.—ED.]

"I hope you had some books which I sent you. I was sorry for poor Mrs. Adey's death, and am afraid you will be sometimes solitary; but endeavour, whether alone or in company, to keep yourself cheerful. My friends likewise die very fast; but such is the state of man. I am, dear love, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

He had, before I left London, resumed the conversation concerning the appearance of a ghost at Newcastle upon Tyne, which Mr. John Wesley believed, but to which Johnson did not give credit. I was, however, desirous to examine the question closely, and at the same time wished to be made acquainted with Mr. John Wesley; for though I differed from him in some points, I admired his various talents and loved his pious zeal. At my request, therefore, Dr. Johnson gave me a letter of introduction to him.

"TO THE REVEREND MR. JOHN WESLEY.

"3d May, 1779.

"SIR,—Mr. Boswell, a gentleman who has been long known to me, is desirous of being known to you, and has asked this recommendation, which I give him with great willingness, because I think it very much to be wished that worthy and religious men should be acquainted with each other. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Wesley being in the course of his ministry at Edinburgh, I presented this letter to him, and was very politely received. I begged to have it returned to me, which was accordingly done. His state of the evidence as to the ghost did not satisfy me.

Ed. [He made this year his usual excursion into the midland counties; but his visit was shortened by the alarming illness of Mr. Thrale.]

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"Lichfield, 29th May, 1779.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 45. "I have now been here a week, and will try to give you my journal, or such parts of it as are fit, in my mind, for communication.

"On Friday, We set out about twelve, and lay at Daventry.

"On Saturday, We dined with Rann at Coventry. He intercepted us at the town's end. I saw Tom Johnson, who had hardly life to know that I was with him. I hear he is since dead. In the evening I came to Lucy, and walked to Stowhill. Mrs. Aston was gone or going to bed. I did not see her.

"Sunday.—After dinner I went to Stowhill, and was very kindly received. At night I saw my old friend Brodhurst—you know him—the playfellow of my infancy, and gave him a guinea.

"Monday.—Dr. Taylor came, and we went with Mrs. Cobb to Greenhill Bower. I had not seen it, perhaps, for fifty years. It is much degenerated. Every thing grows old. Taylor is to fetch me next Saturday.

"Mr. Green came to see us, and I ordered some physick.

"Tuesday.—Physick, and a little company. I dined, I think, with Lucy both Monday and Tuesday.

"Wednesday, Thursday.—I had a few visits, from Peter Garrick among the rest, and dined at Stowhill. My breath very short.

"Friday.—I dined at Stowhill. I have taken physick four days together.

"Saturday.—Mrs. Aston took me out in her chaise, and was very kind. I dined with Mrs. Cobb, and came to Lucy, with whom I found, as I had done the first day, Lady Smith and Miss Vyse."]

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Ashbourne, 14th June, 1779

"Your account of Mr. Thrale's illness[1] is very terrible; but when I remember that he seems to have it peculiar to his constitution—that whatever distemper he has, he always has his head affected—I am less frighted. The seizure was, I think, not apoplectical, but hysterical, and therefore not dangerous to life. I would have you, however, consult such physicians as you think you can best trust. Bromfield seems to have done well, and, by his practice, seems not to suspect an apoplexy. That is a solid and fundamental comfort. I remember Dr. Marsigli, an Italian physician, whose seizure was more violent than Mr. Thrale's, for he fell down helpless; but his case was not considered as of much danger, and he went safe home, and is now a professor at Padua. His fit was considered as only hysterical."] Letters, vol. i. p. 47, 51, 54

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Ashbourne, 17th June, 1779

"It is certain that your first letter did not alarm me in proportion to the danger, for indeed it did not describe the danger as it was. I am glad that you have Heberden; and hope his restoratives and his preservatives will both be effectual. In the preservatives, dear Mr. Thrale must concur; yet what can he reform? or what

[1] [A serious apoplectic attack, which was the precursor of another of the same nature which terminated his existence in the course of the ensuing year.—ED.]

can he add to his regularity and temperance? He can only sleep less. We will do, however, all we can. I go to Lichfield to-morrow, with intent to hasten to Streatham.

"Both Mrs. Aston and Dr. Taylor have had strokes of the palsy. The lady was sixty-eight, and at that age has gained ground upon it; the doctor is, you know, not young, and he is quite well, only suspicious of every sensation in the peccant arm. I hope my dear *master*'s case is yet slighter, and that, as his age is less, his recovery will be more perfect. Let him keep his thoughts diverted and his mind easy."]

["TO HENRY THRALE, ESQ.

"Lichfield, 23d June, 1779.

"DEAR SIR,—To show you how well I think of your health, I have sent you an hundred pounds to keep for me. It will come within one day of quarter day, and that day you must give me. I came by it in a very uncommon manner, and would not confound it with the rest.

"My wicked *mistress* talks as if she thought it possible for me to be indifferent or negligent about your health or hers. If I could have done any good, I had not delayed an hour to come to you, and I will come very soon to try if my advice can be of any use, or my company of any entertainment.

"What can be done, you must do for yourself. Do not let any uneasy thought settle in your mind. Cheerfulness and exercise are your great remedies. Nothing is for the present worth your anxiety. *Vivere læti* is one of the great rules of health. I believe it will be good to ride often, but never to weariness; for weariness is itself a temporary resolution of the nerves, and is therefore to be avoided. Labour is exercise continued to fatigue; exercise is labour used only while it produces pleasure.

"Above all, keep your mind quiet. Do not think with earnestness even of your health, but think on such things as may please without too much agitation; among which, I hope, is, dear sir, your, &c."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"27th July, 1779.

"DEAR MADAM,—I have sent what I can for your German friend[1]. At this time it is very difficult to get any money, and I cannot give much. I am, madam, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

Reyn. MS.

I did not write to Johnson, as usual, upon my return to my family; but tried how he would be affected by my silence. Mr. Dilly sent me a copy of a note which he received from him on the 13th of July, in these words:

"TO MR. DILLY.

"SIR,—Since Mr. Boswell's departure, I have never heard from him. Please to send word what you know of him, and whether you have sent my books to his lady. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON"

My readers will not doubt that his solicitude about me was very flattering.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"13th July, 1779.

"DEAR SIR,—What can possibly have happened, that keeps us two such strangers to each other? I expected to have heard from you when you came home; I expected afterwards. I went into the country and returned; and yet there is no letter from Mr. Boswell. No ill, I hope, has happened; and if ill should happen, why should it be concealed from him who loves you? Is it a fit of humour, that has disposed you to try who can hold out longest without writing? If it be, you have the victory. But I am afraid of something bad; set me free from my suspicions.

"My thoughts are at present employed in guessing the reason of your silence: you must not expect that I should tell you any thing, if I had any thing to tell. Write, pray write to me, and let me know what is or what has been the cause of this long interruption. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 17th July, 1779.

"MY DEAR SIR,—What may be justly denominated a supine indolence of mind has been my state of existence since I last returned to Scotland. In a livelier state I had often suffered severely from long intervals of silence on your part; and I had even been chid by you for expressing my uneasiness. I was willing to take advantage of my insensibility, and while I could bear the experiment, to try whether your affection for me would, after an unusual silence on my part, make you write first. This afternoon I have had a very high satisfaction by receiving your kind letter of inquiry, for which I most gratefully thank you. I am doubtful if it was right to make the experi-

[1] [It is due to the memory of Dr. Johnson's inexhaustible charity to insert this otherwise insignificant note. When he says that he cannot give *much*, let it be recollected, that his only fixed income was his pension of 300*l.* a year, and that he had four or five eleemosynary inmates in his house.—ED.]

ment though I have gained by it. I was beginning to grow tender, and to upbraid myself, especially after having dreamt two nights ago that I was with you. I, and my wife, and my four children, are all well. I would not delay one post to answer your letter; but as it is late, I have not time to do more. You shall soon hear from me, upon many and various particulars; and I shall never again put you to any test. I am, with veneration, my dear sir, your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

On the 22d of July, I wrote to him again; and gave him an account of my last interview with my worthy friend, Mr. Edward Dilly, at his brother's house at Southill in Bedfordshire, where he died soon after I parted from him, leaving me a very kind remembrance of his regard.

I informed him that Lord Hailes, who had promised to furnish him with some anecdotes for his "Lives of the Poets," had sent me three instances of Prior's borrowing from *Gombauld*, in *Recueil des Poetes*, tome 3. Epigram "To John I owed great obligation," p. 25. "To the Duke of Noailles," p. 32. "Sauntering Jack and idle Joan," p. 25.

My letter was a pretty long one, and contained a variety of particulars; but he, it should seem, had not attended to it; for his next to me was as follows:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Streatham, 9th Sept. 1779.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Are you playing the same trick again, and trying who can keep silence longest? Remember that all tricks are either knavish or childish; and that it is as foolish to make experiments upon the constancy of a friend, as upon the chastity of a wife.

"What can be the cause of this second fit of silence, I cannot conjecture; but after one trick, I will not be cheated by another, nor will harass my thoughts with conjectures about the motives of a man who, probably, acts only by caprice. I therefore suppose you are well, and that Mrs. Boswell is well too, and that the fine summer has restored Lord Auchinleck. I am much better than you left me; I think I am better than when I was in Scotland.

"I forgot whether I informed you that poor Thrale has been in great danger. Mrs. Thrale likewise has miscarried, and been much indisposed [1]. Every body else is well. Langton is in camp. I intend to put Lord Hailes's description of Dryden's [2] into another edition, and, as I know his accuracy, wish he would consider the dates, which I could not always settle to my own mind.

"Mr. Thrale goes to Brighthelmstone, about Michaelmas, to be jolly and ride a-hunting. I shall go to town, or perhaps to Oxford. Exercise and gaiety, or rather carelessness, will, I hope, dissipate all remains of his malady; and I likewise hope, by the change of place, to find some opportunities of growing yet better myself. I am, dear sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

My readers will not be displeased at being told every slight circumstance of the manner in which Dr. Johnson contrived to amuse his solitary hours. He sometimes employed himself in chymistry, sometimes in watering and pruning a vine, sometimes in small experiments, at which those who may smile should recollect that there are moments which admit of being soothed only by trifles [3].

[Dr. Johnson was always exceeding fond of chymistry; and they made up a sort of laboratory at Streatham one summer, and diverted themselves with drawing essences and colouring liquors. But the danger in which Mr. Thrale found Dr. Johnson one day (in Mrs. Thrale's absence), with the children and servants assembled round him to see some experiments performed, put an end to all that sort of entertainment; as Mr Thrale was persuaded that his short-sight would have occasioned his destruction in a moment, by bringing him close to a fierce and violent flame. Indeed, it was a perpetual miracle that he did not set himself on fire reading a-bed, as was his constant cus- Piozzi, p. 182-4

[1] [The Editor suspects that the verses on Mrs. Thrale's *thirty-fifth* birthday, which he had placed under the year 1777 (*ante*, p. 87), should rather come in here, as he finds in Johnson's letters to that lady (*post*, 14th August, 1780) that *her thirty-fifth* and *his* seventieth year coincided.—ED.]

[2] Which I communicated to him from his lordship, but it has not yet been published. I have a copy of it.—BOSWELL. The few notices concerning Dryden, which Lord Hailes had collected, the authour afterwards gave me.—MALONE.

[3] In one of his manuscript Diaries, there is the following entry, which marks his curious minute attention: "July 26, 1768.—I shaved my nail by accident in whetting the knife, about an eighth of an inch from the bottom, and about a fourth from the top. This I measure that I may know the growth of nails; the whole is about five-eighths of an inch." Another of the same kind appears August 7, 1779: "*Partem brachii dextri carpo proximam et cutem pectoris circa mamillam dextram rasi, ut notum fieret quanto temporis pili renovarentur.*" And, "Aug. 15, 1783: —I cut from the vine 41 leaves, which weighed five oz. and a half, and eight scruples: I lay them upon my book-case, to see what weigh they will lose by drying."—BOSWELL.

tom, when quite unable even to keep clear of mischief with our best help; and accordingly the foretops of all his wigs were burned by the candle down to the very network.

Future experiments in chymistry, however, were too dangerous, and Mr. Thrale insisted that we should do no more towards finding the philosopher's stone.]

On the 20th of September I defended myself against his suspicion of me, which I did not deserve; and added, "Pray let us write frequently. A whim strikes me, that we should send off a sheet once a week, like a stage-coach, whether it be full or not; nay, though it should be empty. The very sight of your hand-writing would comfort me; and were a sheet to be thus sent regularly, we should much oftener convey something, were it only a few kind words."

My friend, Colonel James Stuart[1], second son of the Earl of Bute, who had distinguished himself as a good officer of the Bedfordshire militia, had taken a publick-spirited resolution to serve his country in its difficulties, by raising a regular regiment, and taking the command of it himself. This, in the heir of the immense property of Wortley, was highly honourable. Having been in Scotland recruiting, he obligingly asked me to accompany him to Leeds, then the head-quarters of his corps; from thence to London for a short time, and afterwards to other places to which the regiment might be ordered. Such an offer, at a time of the year when I had full leisure, was very pleasing; especially as I was to accompany a man of sterling good sense, information, discernment, and conviviality, and was to have a second crop, in one year, of London and Johnson. Of this I informed my illustrious friend in characteristical warm terms, in a letter dated the 30th of September, from Leeds.

On Monday, October 4, I called at his house before he was up. He sent for me to his bedside, and expressed his satisfaction at this incidental meeting, with as much vivacity as if he had been in the gaiety of youth. He called briskly, "Frank, go and get coffee, and let us breakfast *in splendour*."

During this visit to London I had several interviews with him, which it is unnecessary to distinguish particularly. I consulted him as to the appointment of guardians to my children in case of my death. "Sir," said he, "do not appoint a number of guardians. When there are many, they trust one to another, and the business is neglected. I would advise you to choose only one: let him be a man of respectable character, who, for his own credit, will do what is right; let him be a rich man, so that he may be under no temptation to take advantage; and let him be a man of business, who is used to conduct affairs with ability and expertness, to whom, therefore, the execution of the trust will not be burdensome."

[1] [Who assumed successively the names of Wortley and Mackenzie, but was best known as Mr. Stuart Wortley. He was the father of Lord Wharncliffe, and died in 1814.—Ed.]

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"5th Oct. 1779

"When Mr. Boswell waited on Mr. Thrale in Southwark, I directed him to watch all appearances with close attention, and bring me his observations. At his return he told me, that without previous intelligence he should not have discovered that Mr. Thrale had been lately ill." Letters, v. ii. p 60, 61.

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 8th Oct. 1779.

"On Sunday the gout left my ankles, and I went very commodiously to church. On Monday night I felt my feet uneasy. On Tuesday I was quite lame: that night I took an opiate, having first taken physick and fasted. Towards morning on Wednesday the pain remitted. Bozzy came to me, and much talk we had. I fasted another day; and on Wednesday night could walk tolerably. On Thursday, finding myself mending, I ventured on my dinner, which I think has a little interrupted my convalescence. To-day I have again taken physick, and eaten only some stewed apples.—I hope to starve it away. It is now no worse than it was at Brighthelmstone."]

On Sunday, October 10, we dined together at Mr. Strahan's. The conversation having turned on the prevailing practice of going to the East Indies in quest of wealth;—Johnson. "A man had better have ten thousand pounds at the end of ten years passed in England, than twenty thousand pounds at the end of ten years passed in India, because you must compute what you *give* for money; and the man who has lived ten years in India has given up ten years of social comfort, and all those advantages which arise from living in England The ingenious Mr. Brown, distinguished by the name of *Capability Brown*, told me, that he was once at the seat of Lord Clive, who had returned from India with great wealth; and that he showed him at the door of his bed-chamber a large chest, which he said he had once had full of gold; upon which Brown observed, 'I am glad you can bear it so near your bed-chamber.'"

We talked of the state of the poor in London. Johnson. "Saunders Welch,

the justice, who was once high-constable of Holborn, and had the best opportunities of knowing the state of the poor, told me, that I under-rated the number, when I computed that twenty a week, that is, above a thousand a year, died of hunger; not absolutely of immediate hunger; but of the wasting and other diseases which are the consequences of hunger. This happens only in so large a place as London, where people are not known. What we are told about the great sums got by begging is not true: the trade is overstocked. And, you may depend upon it, there are many who cannot get work. A particular kind of manufacture fails: those who have been used to work at it can, for some time, work at nothing else. You meet a man begging; you charge him with idleness: he says, 'I am willing to labour. Will you give me work?' —'I cannot.'—'Why, then, you have no right to charge me with idleness.'"

We left Mr. Strahan's at seven, as Johnson had said he intended to go to evening prayers. As we walked alone, he complained of a little gout in his toe, and said, "I sha'nt go to prayers to night: I shall go tomorrow: whenever I miss church on a Sunday, I resolve to go another day. But I do not always do it." This was a fair exhibition of that vibration between pious resolutions and indolence, which many of us have too often experienced.

I went home with him, and we had a long quiet conversation.

I read him a letter from Dr. Hugh Blair concerning Pope (in writing whose life he was now employed), which I shall insert as a literary curiosity [1].

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Broughton-park, 21st Sept. 1779.

"DEAR SIR,—In the year 1763, being at London, I was carried by Dr. John Blair, Prebendary of Westminster, to dine at old Lord Bathurst's, where we found the late Mr. Mallet, Sir James Porter, who had been ambassador at Constantinople, the late Dr. Macaulay, and two or three more. The conversation turning on Mr. Pope, Lord Bathurst told us, that 'The Essay on Man' was originally composed by Lord Bolingbroke in prose, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verse: that he had read Lord Bolingbroke's manuscript in his own hand-writing; and remembered well, that he was at a loss whether most to admire the elegance of Lord Bolingbroke's prose, or the beauty of Mr. Pope's verse. When Lord Bathurst told this, Mr. Mallet bade me attend, and remember this remarkable piece of information; as, by the course of Nature, I might survive his lordship, and be a witness of his having said so. The conversation was indeed too remarkable to be forgotten. A few days after, meeting with you, who were then also at London, you will remember that I mentioned to you what had passed on this subject, as I was much struck with this anecdote. But what ascertains my recollection of it, beyond doubt, is, that being accustomed to keep a journal of what passed when I was at London, which I wrote out every evening, I find the particulars of the above information, just as I have now given them, distinctly marked; and am thence enabled to fix this conversation to have passed on Friday, the 22d of April, 1763.

"I remember also distinctly, (though I have not for this the authority of my journal), that the conversation going on concerning Mr. Pope, I took notice of a report which had been sometimes propagated that he did not understand Greek. Lord Bathurst said to me that he knew that to be false; for that part of the Iliad was translated by Mr. Pope in his house in the country; and that in the morning when they assembled at breakfast, Mr. Pope used frequently to repeat, with great rapture, the Greek lines which he had been translating, and then to give them his version of them, and to compare them together.

"If these circumstances can be of any use to Dr. Johnson, you have my full liberty to give them to him. I beg you will, at the same time, present to him my most respectful compliments, with best wishes for his success and fame in all his literary undertakings. I am, with great respect, my dearest sir, your most affectionate, and obliged humble servant,

"HUGH BLAIR."

JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, this is too strongly stated. Pope may have had from Bolingbroke the philosophick *stamina* of his Essay; and admitting this to be true, Lord Bathurst did not intentionally falsify

[1] The Rev. Dr. Law, Bishop of Carlisle, in the preface to his valuable edition of Archbishop King's "Essay on the Origin of Evil," mentions that the principles maintained in it had been adopted by Pope in his "Essay on Man;" and adds, "The fact, notwithstanding such denial (Bishop Warburton's), might have been strictly verified by an unexceptionable testimony, viz. that of the late Lord Bathurst, who saw the very same system of the το βελτιον (taken from the archbishop) in Lord Bolingbroke's own hand, lying before Mr. Pope, while he was composing his Essay." This is respectable evidence: but that of Dr. Blair is more direct from the fountain-head, as well as more full. Let me add to it that of Dr. Joseph Warton: "The late Lord Bathurst repeatedly assured me that he had read he whole scheme of 'the Essay on Man,' in the hand-writing of Bolingbroke, and drawn up in a series of propositions, which Pope was to versify and illustrate."—*Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, vol. ii. p. 62.—BOSWELL.

But the thing is not true in the latitude that Blair seems to imagine; we are sure that the poetical imagery, which makes a great part of the poem, was Pope's own. It is amazing, sir, what deviations there are from precise truth, in the account which is given of almost every thing. I told Mrs. Thrale, 'You have so little anxiety about truth, that you never tax your memory with the exact thing.' Now what is the use of the memory to truth, if one is careless of exactness? Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' are very exact; but they contain mere dry particulars. They are to be considered as a Dictionary. You know such things are there; and may be looked at when you please. Robertson paints; but the misfortune is, you are sure he does not know the people whom he paints; so you cannot suppose a likeness. Characters should never be given by an historian, unless he knew the people whom he describes, or copies from those who knew them."

Boswell. "Why, sir, do people play this trick which I observe now, when I look at your grate, putting the shovel against it to make the fire burn?" Johnson. "They play the trick, but it does not make the fire burn [1]. *There* is a better (setting the poker perpendicularly up at right angles with the grate). In days of superstition they thought, as it made a cross with the bars, it would drive away the witch."

Boswell. "By associating with you, sir, I am always getting an accession of wisdom. But perhaps a man, after knowing his own character—the limited strength of his own mind—should not be desirous of having too much wisdom, considering, *quid valeant humeri*, how little he can carry." Johnson. "Sir, be as wise as you can; let a man be *aliis lætus, sapiens sibi:*

'Though pleased to see the dolphins play,
I mind my compass and my way [2].'

You may be wise in your study in the morning, and gay in company at a tavern in the evening. Every man is to take care of his own wisdom and his own virtue, without minding too much what others think."

He said "Dodsley first mentioned to me the scheme of an English Dictionary; but I had long thought of it." Boswell. "You did not know what you were undertaking." Johnson. "Yes, sir, I knew very well what I was undertaking, and very well how to do it, and have done it very well." Boswell. "An excellent climax! and it *has* availed you. In your preface you say 'What would it avail me in this gloom of solitude?' You have been agreeably mistaken."

In his life of Milton, he observes, "I cannot but remark a kind of respect, perhaps unconsciously, paid to this great man by his biographers: every house in which he resided is historically mentioned, as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place that he honoured by his presence." I had, before I read this observation, been desirous of showing that respect to Johnson, by various inquiries. Finding him this evening in a very good humour, I prevailed on him to give me an exact list of his places of residence, since he entered the metropolis as an author, which I subjoin in a note [3].

I mentioned to him a dispute between a friend of mine and his lady, concerning conjugal infidelity, which my friend had maintained was by no means so bad in the husband as in the wife. Johnson. "Your friend was in the right, sir. Between a man and his Maker it is a different question: but between a man and his wife, a husband's infidelity is nothing. They are connected by children, by fortune, by serious considerations of community. Wise married women don't trouble themselves about infidelity in their husbands." Boswell. "To be sure there is a great difference between the offence of infidelity in a man and that of his wife." Johnson. "The difference is boundless. The man imposes no bastards upon his wife [4]."

[1] It certainly does make the fire burn: by repelling the air, it throws a blast on the fire, and so performs the part in some degree of a blower or bellows.—Kearney. [Dr. Kearney's observation applies only to the *shovel;* but by those who have faith in the experiment, the *poker* is supposed to be equally efficacious. After all, it is possible that, in old times, a large shovel used to be applied to obstruct the upper orifice, and so force the air through the grate, and the practice may have outlived the instrument which gave rise to it.—Ed.]

[2] "The Spleen," a poem, [by Mr. Matthew Green.]—Boswell.

[3] [Here followed the list of residences, which will be found *ante*, v. i. p. 42.—Ed.]

[4] [This seems too *narrow* an illustration of a "*boundless* difference." The introduction of a bastard into a family, though a great injustice and a great crime, is only one consequence (and that an occasional and accidental one) of a greater crime and a more afflicting injustice. The precaution of Julia, alluded to *ante*, p. 58, did not render her innocent. In a moral and in a religious view, the guilt is no doubt equal in man or woman; but have not both Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell overlooked a *social* view of this subject? which is perhaps the true reason of the greater indulgence which is generally afforded to the infidelity of the man—I mean the effect on the personal character of the different sexes. The crime does not seem to alter or debase the qualities of the *man*, in any essential degree; but when the superiour purity and delicacy of the *woman* is *once contaminated* it is destroyed—*facilis decensus Averni*—she generally falls into utter degradation, and thence, probably, it is that

Here it may be questioned, whether Johnson was entirely in the right. I suppose it will not be controverted, that the difference in the degree of criminality is very great, on account of consequences: but still it may be maintained, that, independent of moral obligation, infidelity is by no means a light offence in a husband; because it must hurt a delicate attachment, in which a mutual constancy is implied, with such refined sentiments as Massinger has exhibited in his play of "The Picture." Johnson probably at another time would have admitted this opinion. And let it be kept in remembrance, that he was very careful not to give any encouragement to irregular conduct. A gentleman, not adverting to the distinction made by him upon this subject, supposed a case of singular perverseness in a wife, and heedlessly said, "That then he thought a husband might do as he pleased with a safe conscience." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, this is wild indeed (smiling); you must consider that fornication is a crime in a single man, and you cannot have more liberty by being married."

ED. [On all occasions he was inclined to attribute to the *marital* character great exemption and authority.]

Piozzi, p. 115. [When any disputes arose between our married acquaintance, however, Dr. Johnson always sided with the husband, "whom," he said, "the woman had probably provoked so often, she scarce knew when or how she had disobliged him first. Women," said Dr. Johnson, "give great offence by a contemptuous spirit of non-compliance on petty occasions. The

Piozzi, p. 117. man calls his wife to walk with him in the shade, and she feels a strange desire just at that moment to sit in the sun; he offers to read her a play, or sing her a song, and she calls the children in to disturb them, or advises him to seize that opportunity of settling the family accounts. Twenty such tricks will the faithfulest wife in the world not refuse to play, and then look astonished when the fellow fetches in a mistress. Boarding-schools were established," continued he, "for the conjugal quiet of the parents: the two partners cannot agree which child to fondle, nor how to fondle them, so they put the young ones to school, and remove the cause of contention. The little girl pokes her head, the mother reproves her sharply: 'Do not mind your mamma,' says the father, 'my dear, but do your own way.' The mother complains to me of this: 'Madam,' said I, 'your husband is right all the while; he is with you but two hours of the day perhaps, and then you tease him by making the child cry. Are not ten hours enough for tuition? And are the hours of pleasure so frequent in life, that when a man gets a couple of quiet ones to spend in familiar chat with his wife, they must be poisoned by petty mortifications? Put Missey to school; she will learn to hold her head like her neighbours, and you will no longer torment your family for want of other talk.'"]

[To the same effect, Hawkins relates that he used to say, that in all family disputes the odds were in favour of the husband, from his superior knowledge of life and manners: he was, nevertheless, extremely fond of the company and coversation of women, and had certainly very correct notions as to the basis on which matrimonial connexions should be formed. He always advised his friends, when they were about to marry, to unite themselves to a woman of a pious and religious frame of mind. "Fear of the world, and a sense of honour," said he, "may have an effect upon a man's conduct and behaviour; a woman without religion is without the only motive that in general can incite her to do well."

Hawk Apoph p. 210.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 202.

When some one asked him for what he should marry, he replied, "First, for virtue; secondly, for wit; thirdly, for beauty; and fourthly, for money."] [He occasionally said very contemptuous things of the sex; but was exceedingly angry when Mrs. Thrale told Miss Reynolds that he said, "It was well managed of some one to leave his affairs in the hands of his wife, because, in matters of business," said he, "no woman stops at integrity." "This was, I think," added Mrs. Thrale, "the only sentence I ever observed him solicitous to explain away after he had uttered it."]

Piozzi, p. 210.

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society makes a distinction conformable to his own interests—it connives at the offence of men, because men are not much deteriorated *as members of general society* by the offence, and it is severe againt the offence of women, because women, as members of society, are utterly degraded by it. This view of the subject will be illustrated by a converse proposition—for instance: The world thinks not the worse, nay rather the better, of a *woman* for wanting *courage;* but such a defect in a *man* is wholly unpardonable, because, as Johnson wisely and wittily said, "he who has not the virtue of courage has no security for any other virtue." Society, therefore, requires *chastity* from *women* as it does *courage* from *men*. The Editor, in suggesting this merely-worldly consideration, hopes not to be misunderstood as offering any defence of a breach, on the part of a man, of divine and human laws; he by no means goes so far as Dr. Johnson does in the text, but he has thought it right to suggest a difference on a most important subject, which had been overlooked by that great moralist, or is, at least, not stated by Mr. Boswell.—ED.]

He this evening expressed himself strongly against the Roman Catholics, observing, "In every thing in which they differ from us, they are wrong." He was even against the invocation of saints; in short, he was in the humour of opposition.

Having regretted to him that I had learnt little Greek, as is too generally the case in Scotland; that I had for a long time hardly applied at all to the study of that noble language, and that I was desirous of being told by him what method to follow; he recommended as easy helps, Sylvanus's "First Book of the Iliad;" Dawson's "Lexicon to the Greek New Testament;" and "Hesiod," with "Pasoris Lexicon" at the end of it.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 11th Oct. 1779.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 63. "I do not see why you should trouble yourself with physicians while Mr. Thrale grows better. Company and bustle will, I hope, complete his cure. Let him gallop over the Downs in the morning, call his friends about him to dinner, and frisk in the rooms at night, and outrun time and outface misfortune.

"Notwithstanding all authorities against bleeding, Mr. Thrale bled himself well ten days ago.

"You will lead a jolly life, and perhaps think little of me; but I have been invited twice to Mrs. Vesey's *conversation*, but have not gone. The gout that was in my ankles, when Queeney criticised my gait, passed into my toe, but I have hunted it, and starved it, and it makes no figure. It has drawn some attention, for Lord and Lady Lucan sent to inquire after me. This is all the news that I have to tell you. Yesterday I dined with Mr. Strahan, and Boswell was there. We shall be both tomorrow at Mr. Ramsay's.]

On Tuesday, October 12, I dined with him at Mr Ramsay's, with Lord Newhaven[1], and some other company, none of whom I recollect, but a beautiful Miss Graham[2], a relation [niece] of his lordship's, who asked Dr. Johnson to hob or nob with her. He was flattered by such pleasing attention, and politely told her, he never drank wine; but if she would drink a glass of water, he was much at her service. She accepted. "Oho, sir!" said Lord Newhaven, "you are caught." JOHNSON. "Nay, I do not see *how I am caught;* but if I am caught, I don't want to get free again. If I am caught, I hope to be kept." Then when the two glasses of water were brought, smiling placidly to the young lady, he said, "Madam, let us *reciprocate.*"

Lord Newhaven and Johnson carried on an argument for some time concerning the Middlesex election. Johnson said, "Parliament may be considered as bound by law, as a man is bound when there is nobody to tie the knot. As it is clear that the house of commons may expel, and expel again and again, why not allow of the power to incapacitate for that parliament, rather than have a perpetual contest kept up between parliament and the people." Lord Newhaven took the opposite side; but respectfully said, "I speak with great deference to you, Dr. Johnson; I speak to be instructed." This had its full effect on my friend. He bowed his head almost as low as the table to a complimenting nobleman, and called out, "My lord, my lord, I do not desire all this ceremony; let us tell our minds to one another quietly." After the debate was over, he said, "I have got lights on the subject to-day, which I had not before." This was a great deal from him, especially as he had written a pamphlet upon it.

He observed, "The house of commons was originally not a privilege of the people, but a check, for the crown, on the house of lords. I remember, Henry the Eighth wanted them to do something; they hesitated in the morning, but did it in the afternoon. He told them, 'It is well you did; or half your heads should have been upon Temple-bar.' But the house of commons is now no longer under the power of the crown, and therefore must be bribed." He added, "I have no delight in talking of publick affairs."

Of his fellow-collegian[3], the celebrated Mr. George Whitefield, he said, "Whitefield never drew as much attention as a mountebank does: he did not draw attention by doing better than others, but by doing what was strange. Were Astley[4] to

[1] [William Mayne, Esq. was created a baronet in 1763; a privy-counsellor in Ireland in 1766; and in 1776 advanced to the Irish peerage by the title of Baron Newhaven. He took an active part in the intrigues, jobs, and squabbles, which constituted the Irish politics of his day.—ED.]

[2] Now the lady of Sir Henry Dashwood, bart —BOSWELL.

[3] [George Whitfield, or Whitefield, did not enter at Pembroke College before November, 1732, more than twelve months after Johnson's name was off the books, and nearly three years after he had ceased to be resident at Oxford; so that, strictly speaking, they were not fellow-collegians, though they were both of the same college.—HALL.]

[4] [Philip Astley, a celebrated horse-rider, who first exhibited equestrian pantomimes, in which his son (who survived his father but a short time) rode with great grace and agility. Astley had at once theatres in Paris, London, and Dublin, and migrated with his actors, biped and quadruped, from one to the other.—ED.]

preach a sermon standing upon his head on a horse's back, he would collect a multitude to hear him; but no wise man would say he had made a better sermon for that. I never treated Whitefield's ministry with contempt; I believe he did good. He had devoted himself to the lower classes of mankind, and among them he was of use. But when familiarity and noise claim the praise due to knowledge, art, and elegance, we must beat down such pretensions."

What I have preserved of his conversation during the remainder of my stay in London at this time is only what follows: I told him that when I objected to keeping company with a notorious infidel, a celebrated friend of ours said to me, "I do not think that men who live laxly in the world, as you and I do, can with propriety assume such an authority: Dr. Johnson may, who is uniformly exemplary in his conduct. But it is not very consistent to shun an infidel to-day, and get drunk to-morrow." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, this is sad reasoning. Because a man cannot be right in all things, is he to be right in nothing? Because a man sometimes gets drunk, is he therefore to steal? This doctrine would very soon bring a man to the gallows."

After all, however, it is a difficult question how far sincere christians should associate with the avowed enemies of religion; for in the first place, almost every man's mind may be more or less "corrupted by evil communications;" secondly, the world may very naturally suppose that they are not really in earnest in religion, who can easily bear its opponents; and thirdly, if the profane find themselves quite well received by the pious, one of the checks upon an open declaration of their infidelity, and one of the probable chances of obliging them seriously to reflect, which their being shunned would do, is removed.

He, I know not why, showed upon all occasions an aversion to go to Ireland, where I proposed to him that we should make a tour. JOHNSON. "It is the last place that I should wish to travel." BOSWELL. "Should you not like to see Dublin, sir?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; Dublin is only a worse capital." BOSWELL. "Is not the Giant's-causeway worth seeing?" JOHNSON. "Worth seeing? yes; but not worth going to see."

Yet he had a kindness for the Irish nation; and thus generously expressed himself to a gentleman from that country, on the subject of an Union which artful politicians have often had in view: "Do not make an union with us, sir. We should unite with you only to rob you. We should have robbed the Scotch, if they had had any thing of which we could have robbed them"

Of an acquaintance of ours, whose manners and every thing about him, though expensive, were coarse, he said, "Sir, you see in him vulgar prosperity."

A foreign minister of no very high talents, who had been in his company for a considerable time quite overlooked, happened luckily to mention that he had read some of his "*Rambler*" in Italian, and admired it much. This pleased him greatly; he observed that the title had been translated *Il Genio errante*, though I have been told it was rendered more ludicrously *Il Vagabondo;* and finding that this minister gave such a proof of his taste, he was all attention to him, and on the first remark which he made, however simple, exclaimed, "The ambassadour says well; His excellency observes—;" and then he expanded and enriched the little that had been said in so strong a manner, that it appeared something of consequence. This was exceedingly entertaining to the company who were present, and many a time afterwards it furnished a pleasant topick of merriment. "*The ambassadour says well*" became a laughable term of applause when no mighty matter had been expressed.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"16th October, 1779.

"My foot gives me very little trouble; but it is not yet well. I have dined, since you saw me, not so often as once in two days. But I am told how well I look; and I really think I get more mobility. I dined on Tuesday with Ramsay, and on Thursday with Paoli, who talked of coming to see you, till I told him of your migration. Letters, vol. ii. p. 65.

"Mrs. Williams is not yet returned; but discord and discontent reign in my humble habitation as in the palaces of monarchs. Mr. Levet and Mrs. Desmoulins have vowed eternal hate. Levet is the more insidious, and wants me to turn her out. Poor Williams writes word that she is no better, and has left off her physick. Mr. Levet has seen Dr. Lewis, who declares himself hopeless of doing her any good. Lawrence desponded some time ago.

"I thought I had a little fever some time, but it seems to be starved away. Bozzy says, he never saw me so well."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"19th October, 1779.

"DEAREST MADAM,—You are extremely kind in taking so much trouble. My foot is almost well; and one of my first visits will certainly be to Dover-street[1]. Reyn MSS.

"You will do me a great favour if you

[1] [Where Miss Reynolds lived.—ED.]

will buy for me the prints of Mr. Burke, Mr. Dyer, and Dr. Goldsmith, as you know good impressions.

"If any of your own pictures are engraved, buy them for me. I am fitting up a little room with prints I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

I left London on Monday, October 18, and accompanied Colonel Stuart to Chester, where his regiment was to lie for some time.

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Chester, 22d October, 1779.

"MY DEAR SIR,—It was not till one o'clock on Monday morning that Colonel Stuart and I left London; for we chose to bid a cordial adieu to Lord Mountstuart, who was to set out on that day on his embassy to Turin. We drove on excellently, and reached Lichfield in good time enough that night. The colonel had heard so preferable a character of the George, that he would not put up at the Three Crowns, so that I did not see our host, Wilkins. We found at the George as good accommodation as we could wish to have, and I fully enjoyed the comfortable thought that *I was in Lichfield again.* Next morning it rained very hard; and as I had much to do in a little time, I ordered a post-chaise, and between eight and nine sallied forth to make a round of visits. I first went to Mr. Green, hoping to have had him to accompany me to all my other friends; but he was engaged to attend the Bishop of Sodor and Man, who was then lying at Lichfield very ill of the gout. Having taken a hasty glance at the additions to Green's museum [1], from which it was not easy to break away, I next went to the Friary, where I at first occasioned some tumult in the ladies, who were not prepared to receive *company* so early; but my *name,* which has by wonderful felicity come to be closely associated with yours, soon made all easy; and Mrs. Cobb [2] and Miss Adey re-assumed their seats at the breakfast-table, which they had quitted with some precipitation. They received me with the kindness of an old acquaintance; and, after we had joined in a cordial chorus to *your* praise, Mrs. Cobb gave *me* the high satisfaction of hearing that you said, 'Boswell is a man who I believe never left a house without leaving a wish for his return.' And she afterwards added, that she bid you tell me, that if ever I came to Lichfield, she hoped I would take a bed at the Friary. From thence I drove to Peter Garrick's [3], where I also found a very flattering welcome. He appeared to me to enjoy his usual cheerfulness; and he very kindly asked me to come when I could, and pass a week with him. From Mr. Garrick's I went to the Palace to wait on Mr. Seward. I was first entertained by his lady and daughter, he himself being in bed with a cold, according to his valetudinary custom. But he desired to see me: and I found him dressed in his black gown, with a white flannel night-gown above it; so that he looked like a Dominican friar. He was good-humoured and polite; and under his roof too my reception was very pleasing. I then proceeded to Stowhill, and first paid my respects to Mrs. Gastrell, whose conversation I was not willing to quit. But my sand-glass was now beginning to run low, as I could not trespass too long on the colonel's kindness, who obligingly waited for me; so I hastened to Mrs. Aston's, whom I found much better than I feared I should; and there I met a brother-in-law of these ladies, who talked much of you, and very well too, as it appeared to me. It then only remained to visit Mrs. Lucy Porter, which I did, I really believe, with sincere satisfaction on both sides. I am sure I was glad to see her again; and as I take her to be very honest, I trust she was glad to see me again, for she expressed herself so that I could not doubt of her being in earnest. What a great keystone of kindness, my dear sir, were you that morning; for we were all held together by our common attachment to you! I cannot say that I ever passed two hours with more self-complacency than I did those two at Lichfield. Let me not entertain any suspicion that this is idle vanity. Will not you confirm me in my persuasion, that he who finds himself so regarded has just reason to be happy?

"We got to Chester about midnight on Tuesday; and here again I am in a state of much enjoyment. Colonel Stuart and his officers treat me with all the civility I could wish; and I play my part admirably. *Lætus aliis, sapiens sibi,* the classical sentence which you, I imagine, invented the other day, is exemplified in my present existence. The bishop, to whom I had the honour to be known several years ago, shows me much attention; and I am edified by his conversation. I must not omit to tell you, that his lordship admires, very highly, your prefaces to the Poets. I am daily obtaining an extension of agreeable acquaintance,

[1] [See *ante*, p. 44.—ED.]

[2] [Mrs. Cobb was the daughter of Mr. Hammond, an apothecary (*ante*, v. i. p. 13), and the widow of a mercer, who had retired from business, and resided at the Friary. Miss Adey was her niece, daughter of the town-clerk of Lichfield: she married William Sneyd, Esq. of Belmont-house, near Cheadle, and died 1829, æt. 87.—HARWOOD.]

[3] [See vol. i. p. 479. *n.* and *ante* p 43 - ED.]

so that I am kept in animated variety; and the study of the place itself, by the assistance of books and of the bishop, is sufficient occupation. Chester pleases my fancy more than any town I ever saw. But I will not enter upon it at all in this letter.

"How long I shall stay here I cannot yet say. I told a very pleasing young lady[1], niece to one of the prebendaries, at whose house I saw her, 'I have come to Chester, madam, I cannot tell how; and far less can I tell how I am to get away from it.' Do not think me too juvenile. I beg it of you, my dear sir, to favour me with a letter while I am here, and add to the happiness of a happy friend, who is ever, with affectionate veneration, most sincerely yours,

"JAMES BOSWELL.

"If you do not write directly, so as to catch me here, I shall be disappointed. Two lines from you will keep my lamp burning bright."

["TO MRS. ASTON.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 25th Oct. 1779.

"DEAREST MADAM,—Mrs. Gastrell is so kind as to write to me, and yet I always write to you; but I consider what is written to either as written to both. Pemb. MSS.

"Publick affairs do not seem to promise much amendment, and the nation is now full of distress. What will be the event of things none can tell. We may still hope for better times.

"My health, which I began to recover when I was in the country, continues still in a good state: it costs me, indeed, some physick, and something of abstinence, but it pays the cost. I wish, dear madam, I could hear a little of your improvements.

"Here is no news. The talk of the invasion seems to be over. But a very turbulent session of parliament is expected; though turbulence is not likely to do any good. Those are happiest who are out of the noise and tumult. There will be no great violence of faction at Stowhill; and that it may be free from that and all other inconvenience and disturbance is the sincere wish of all your friends. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 27th Oct. 1779.

"DEAR SIR,—Why should you importune me so earnestly to write? Of what importance can it be to hear of distant friends, to a man who finds himself welcome wherever he goes, and makes new friends faster than he can want them? If to the delight of such universal kindness of reception any thing can be added by knowing that you retain my good-will, you may indulge yourself in the full enjoyment of that small addition.

"I am glad that you made the round of Lichfield with so much success. The oftener you are seen, the more you will be liked. It was pleasing to me to read that Mrs. Aston was so well, and that Lucy Porter was so glad to see you.

"In the place where you now are, there is much to be observed; and you will easily procure yourself skilful directors. But what will you do to keep away the *black dog*[2] that worries you at home? If you would, in compliance with your father's advice, inquire into the old tenures and old charters of Scotland, you would certainly open to yourself many striking scenes of the manners of the middle ages. The feudal system, in a country half-barbarous, is naturally productive of great anomalies in civil life. The knowledge of past times is naturally growing less in all cases not of publick record; and the past time of Scotland is so unlike the present, that it is already difficult for a Scotchman to image the economy of his grandfather. Do not be tardy nor negligent; but gather up eagerly what can yet be found[3].

"We have, I think, once talked of another project, a history of the late insurrection in Scotland, with all its incidents. Many falsehoods are passing into uncontradicted history. Voltaire, who loved a striking story, has told what he could not find to be true.

"You may make collections for either of these projects, or for both, as opportunities occur, and digest your materials at leisure. The great direction which Burton has left to men disordered like you is this, *Be not solitary, be not idle;* which I would thus modify:—If you are idle, be not solitary; if you are solitary, be not idle.

"There is a letter for you, from your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. ASTON.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 5th Nov. 1779.

"DEAREST MADAM,—Having had the pleasure of hearing from Mr. Boswell that he found you better Pemb. MSS.

[1] Miss Lætitia Barnston.—BOSWELL.

[2] [This was a phrase in the familiar society at Streatham to express hypochondriacal anxieties of mind. It is frequently used in the correspondence between Johnson and Mrs. Thrale, and is equivalent to the "*dragons*" of Madame de Sévigné —ED.]

[3] I have a valuable collection made by my father, which, with some additions and illustrations of my own, I intend to publish. I have some hereditary claim to be an antiquary; not only from my father, but as being descended, by

than he expected, I will not forbear to tell you how much I was delighted with the news. May your health increase and increase till you are as well as you can wish yourself, or I can wish you!

"My friends tell me that my health improves too. It is certain that I use both physick and abstinence; and my endeavours have been blessed with more success than at my age I could reasonably hope. I please myself with the thoughts of visiting you next year in so robust a state, that I shall not be afraid of the hill between Mrs. Gastrell's house and yours, nor think it necessary to rest myself between Stowhill and Lucy Porter's.

"Of publick affairs I can give you no very comfortable account. The invasion has vanished for the present, as I expected. I never believed that any invasion was intended.

"But whatever we have escaped, we have done nothing, nor are likely to do better another year. We, however, who have no part of the nation's welfare intrusted to our management, have nothing to do but to serve God, and leave the world submissively in his hands.

"All trade is dead, and pleasure is scarce alive. Nothing almost is purchased but such things as the buyer cannot do without, so that a general sluggishness and general discontent are spread over the town. All the trades of luxury and elegance are nearly at a stand. What the parliament, when it meets, wil' do, and indeed what it ought to do, is very difficult to say.

"Pray set Mrs. Gastrell, who is a dear good lady, to write to me from time to time; for I have great delight in hearing from you, especially when I hear any good news of your health. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Carlisle, 7th Nov. 1779.

"MY DEAR SIR,—That I should importune you to write to me at Chester is not wonderful, when you consider what an avidity I have for delight; and that the *amor* of pleasure, like the *amor nummi*, increases in proportion with the quantity which we possess of it. Your letter, so full of polite kindness and masterly counsel, came like a large treasure upon me, while already glittering with riches. I was quite enchanted at Chester, so that I could with difficulty quit it. But the enchantment was the reverse of that of Circé; for so far was there from being any thing sensual in it, that I was *all mind*. I do not mean all reason only; for my fancy was kept finely in play. And why not? If you please, I will send you a copy or an abridgement of my Chester journal, which is truly a log book of felicity.

"The bishop[1] treated me with a kindness which was very flattering. I told him that you regretted you had seen so little of Chester. His lordship bade me tell you, that he should be glad to show you more of it. I am proud to find the friendship with which you honour me is known in so many places.

"I arrived here late last night. Our friend the dean[2] has been gone from hence some months; but I am told at my inn, that he is very *populous* (popular). However, I found Mr. Law, the archdeacon, son to the bishop[3], and with him I have breakfasted and dined very agreeably. I got acquainted with him at the assizes here, about a year and a half ago. He is a man of great variety of knowledge, uncommon genius, and, I believe, sincere religion. I received the holy sacrament in the cathedral in the morning, this being the first Sunday in the month; and was at prayers there in the morning. It is divinely cheering to me to think that there is a cathedral so near Auchinleck; and I now leave Old England in such a state of mind as I am thankful to God for granting me.

"The *black dog*[4] that worries me at home I cannot but dread; yet as I have been for some time past in a military train, I trust I shall *repulse* him. To hear from you will animate me like the sound of a trumpet; I therefore hope, that soon after my return to the northern field, I shall receive a few lines from you.

"Colonel Stuart did me the honour to escort me in his carriage to show me Liverpool, and from thence back again to Warrington, where we parted[5]. In justice to my valuable wife, I must inform you she wrote to me, that as I was so happy, she would not be so selfish as to wish me to return sooner than business absolutely required my presence. She made my clerk write to me a post or two after to the same

the mother's side, from the able and learned Sir John Skene, whose merit bids defiance to all the attempts which have been made to lessen his fame.—BOSWELL.

[1] [Doctor Porteus, afterwards Bishop of London, in which see he died.—ED.]

[2] [Dr. Percy.—ED.]

[3] [Dr. Edmond Law, master of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, Bishop of Carlisle, in which see he died in 1787.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 223.—ED.]

[5] His regiment was afterwards ordered to Jamaica, where he accompanied it, and almost lost his life by the climate. This impartial order I should think a sufficient refutation of the idle rumour that "there was still something behind the throne greater than the throne itself."—BOSWELL

purpose, by commission from her; and this day a kind letter from her met me at the post-office here, acquainting me that she and the little ones were well, and expressing all their wishes for my return home. I am, more and more, my dear sir, your affectionate and obliged humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 13th Nov. 1779.

"DEAR SIR,—Your last letter was not only kind but fond. But I wish you to get rid of all intellectual excesses, and neither to exalt your pleasures, nor aggravate your vexations, beyond their real and natural state. Why should you not be as happy at Edinburgh as at Chester? *In culpa est animus, qui se non effugit usquam.* Please yourself with your wife and children, and studies, and practice.

"I have sent a petition[1] from Lucy Porter, with which I leave it to your discretion whether it is proper to comply. Return me her letter, which I have sent, that you may know the whole case, and not be seduced to any thing that you may afterwards repent. Miss Doxy perhaps you know to be Mr. Garrick's niece.

"If Dean Percy can be popular at Carlisle, he may be very happy. He has in his disposal two livings, each equal or almost equal in value to the deanery; he may take one himself, and give the other to his son.

"How near is the cathedral to Auchinleck, that you are so much delighted with it? It is, I suppose, at least an hundred and fifty miles off. However, if you are pleased, it is so far well.

"Let me know what reception you have from your father, and the state of his health. Please him as much as you can, and add no pain to his last years.

"Of our friends here I can recollect nothing to tell you. I have neither seen nor heard of Langton. Beauclerk is just returned from Brighthelmstone, I am told, much better. Mr. Thrale and his family are still there; and his health is said to be visibly improved. He has not bathed, but hunted.

"At Bolt-court there is much malignity, but of late little open hostility[2]. I have had a cold, but it is gone.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, &c. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On November 22, and December 21, I wrote to him from Edinburgh, giving a very favourable report of the family of Miss Doxy's lover;—that after a good deal of inquiry I had discovered the sister of Mr. Francis Stewart, one of his amanuenses when writing his Dictionary;—that I had, as desired by him, paid her a guinea for an old pocket book of her brother's, which he had retained; and that the good woman, who was in very moderate circumstances, but contented and placid, wondered at his scrupulous and liberal honesty, and received the guinea as if sent her by Providence;—that I had repeatedly begged of him to keep his promise to send me his letter to Lord Chesterfield; and that this *memento*, like *Delenda est Carthago*, must be in every letter that I should write to him, till I had obtained my object.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 25th Oct. 1779.

"On Saturday I walked to Dover-street and back. Yesterday I dined with Sir Joshua. There was Mr. Elliot[3] of Cornwall, who inquired after my master. At night I was bespoken by Lady Lucan; but she was taken ill, and the assembly was put off. I am to dine with Renny to-morrow. Letters, vol. ii. p. 70.

* * * * * *

"Some old gentlewomen at the next door are in very great distress. Their little annuity comes from Jamaica, and is therefore uncertain; and one of them has had a fall, and both are very helpless; and the poor have you to help them. Persuade my master to let me give them something for him. It will be bestowed upon real want."]

In 1780, the world was kept in impatience for the completion of his "Lives of the Poets," upon which he was employed so far as his indolence allowed him to labour.

I wrote to him on January 1 and March 13, sending him my notes of Lord Marchmont's information concerning Pope;—complaining that I had not heard from him for almost four months, though he was two letters in my debt; that I had suffered again from melancholy;—hoping that he had been in so much better company (the Poets), that he had not time to think of his distant friends; for if that were the case, I should have some recompense for my uneasiness,—that the state of my affairs did not admit of my coming to London this year; and begging he would return me Goldsmith's two poems, with his lines marked.

His friend Dr Lawrence having now suffered the greatest affliction to which a man is liable, and which Johnson himself had felt in the most severe manner, Johnson

[1] Requesting me to inquire concerning the family of a gentleman who was then paying his addresses to Miss Doxy.—BOSWELL.

[2] See *ante*, page 199.—BOSWELL.

[3] [First Lord Elliot. See *post*, *sub* 30th March 1781.—ED.]

wrote to him in an admirable strain of sympathy and pious consolation.

"TO DR. LAWRENCE.

"20th January, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,—At a time when all your friends ought to show their kindness, and with a character which ought to make all that know you your friends, you may wonder that you have yet heard nothing from me.

"I have been hindered by a vexatious and incessant cough, for which within these ten days I have been bled once, fasted four or five times, taken physick five times, and opiates, I think, six. This day it seems to remit.

"The loss, dear sir, which you have lately suffered, I felt many years ago, and know therefore how much has been taken from you, and how little help can be had from consolation. He that outlives a wife whom he has long loved, sees himself disjoined from the only mind that has the same hopes, and fears, and interest; from the only companion with whom he has shared much good or evil; and with whom he could set his mind at liberty, to retrace the past or anticipate the future. The continuity of being is lacerated; the settled course of sentiment and action is stopped; and life stands suspended and motionless, till it is driven by external causes into a new channel. But the time of suspense is dreadful.

"Our first recourse in this distressed solitude is, perhaps for want of habitual piety, to a gloomy acquiescence in necessity. Of two mortal beings, one must lose the other. But surely there is a higher and better comfort to be drawn from the consideration of that Providence which watches over all, and a belief that the living and the dead are equally in the hands of God, who will reunite those whom he has separated, or who sees that it is best not to reunite. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

ED. [In the spring of this year Dr. Johnson's society lost one of its brightest ornaments by the death of Mr. Beauclerk[1]. The charms of conversation—like those of acting—are transient; and of the social talents of Beauclerk, as of the dramatic powers of Garrick, little can remain, but the general testimony of cotemporarles to their excellence. Mr. Hardy has preserved Lord Charlemont's opinion of Mr. Beauclerk, with whom he was much connected. "His conversation," said his lordship, "could scarcely be equalled. He possessed an exquisite taste, various accomplishments, and the most perfect good breeding. He was eccentric—often querulous—entertaining a contempt for the generality of the world, which the politeness of his manners could not always conceal; but to those whom he liked most generous and friendly. Devoted at one moment to pleasure, and at another to literature, sometimes absorbed in play, and sometimes in books, he was, altogether, one of the most accomplished and, when in good humour, and surrounded by those who suited his fancy, one of the most agreeable men that could possibly exist." Mr. Hardy has preserved a few of Mr. Beauclerk's letters to Lord Charlemont, which are probably characteristic of his style, and one or two which touch on Johnson and his society the reader will perhaps not think misplaced here.

Life of Charlemont, vol. i. p. 344, 347.

"MR. BEAUCLERK TO THE EARL OF CHARLEMONT.

"Adelphi, 20th Nov. 1773.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I delayed writing to you, as I had flattered myself that I should have been able to have paid you a visit at Dublin before this time; but I have been prevented, not by my own negligence and indolence, but by various matters. I am rejoiced to find by your letter that Lady Charlemont is as you wish. I have yet remaining so much benevolence towards mankind, as to wish that there may be a son of yours educated by you as a specimen of what mankind ought to be.

"Goldsmith the other day put a paragraph into the newspapers in praise of Lord Mayor Townshend. The same night he happened to sit next to Sord Shelburne, at Drury-lane; I mentioned the circumstance of the paragraph to him, and he said to Goldsmith that he hoped he had mentioned nothing about Malagrida in it. 'Do you know,' answered Goldsmith, 'that I never could conceive the reason why they call you Malagrida, *for* Malagrida was a very good sort of man[2].' You see plainly what he meant to say, but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says that this story is a picture of Goldsmith's whole life.

"Johnson has been confined for some weeks in the Isle of Sky; we hear that he was obliged to swim over to the main land, taking hold of a cow's tail. Be that as it may, Lady Di[3] has promised to make a drawing of it.

[1] [He died 11th March in his forty-first year. —ED.]

[2] [See *post*, 23d March, 1783.—ED.]

[3] [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 316. Lady Di's pencil was much celebrated, and Mr. Walpole built a room for the reception of some of her drawings, which he called the Beauclerk closet: but the editor has never seen any of her ladyship's works which seemed to him to merit, as mere works of art, such high reputation.—ED.]

"Our poor *club* is in a miserable state of decay; unless you come and relieve it, it will certainly expire. Would you imagine that Sir Joshua Reynolds is extremely anxious to be a member at Almack's[1]? You see what noble ambition will make a man attempt. That den is not yet opened, consequently I have not been there; so, for the present, I am clear upon that score. I suppose your confounded Irish politics take up your whole attention at present. If they could but have obtained the absentee tax, the *Irish* parliament would have been perfect. They would have voted themselves out of parliament, and lessened their estates one half of the value. This is patriotism with a vengeance! There is nothing new at present in the literary world. Mr. Jones[2], of our *club*, is going to publish an account, in Latin, of the eastern poetry, with extracts translated verbatim in verse. I will order Elmsly[3] to send it to you, when it comes out; I fancy it will be a very pretty book. Goldsmith has written a prologue for Mrs. Yates, which she spoke this evening before the Opera. It is very good. You will see it soon in all the newspapers, otherwise I would send it to you. I hope to hear in your next letter that you have fixed your time for returning to England. We cannot do without you. If you do not come here, I will bring all the *club* over to Ireland, to live with you, and that will drive you here in your own defence. Johnson shall spoil your books, Goldsmith pull your flowers, and Boswell *talk*[4] to you: stay then if you can. Adieu, my dear lord. Pray make my compliments to Lady Charlemont, and believe me to be very sincerely and affectionately yours,

"T. Beauclerk."

"MR. BEAUCLERK TO LORD CHARLEMONT.

"Adelphi, 24th Dec. 1773.

"My dear lord,—I hope you received a letter from me some time ago; I mention this that I may not appear worse than I am, and likewise to hint to you that, when you receive this, you will be two letters in my debt. I hope your parliament has finished all its absurdities, and that you will be at leisure to come over here to attend your club, where you will do much more good than all the patriots in the world ever did to any body, viz. you will make very many of your friends extremely happy; and you know Goldsmith has informed us that no form of government ever contributed either to the happiness or misery of any one.

"I saw a letter from Foote, with an account of an Irish tragedy; the subject is Manlius, and the last speech which he makes, when he is pushed off from the Tarpeian rock, is, 'Sweet Jesus, where am I going?' Pray send me word if this is true. We have a good comedy[5] here which is good for nothing; bad as it is, however, it succeeds very well, and has almost killed Goldsmith with envy.

"I have no news either literary or political to send you. Every body, except myself and about a million of vulgars, are in the country. I am closely confined, as Lady Di expects to be every hour. I am, my dear lord, very sincerely and affectionately yours, "T. Beauclerk."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"8th April, 1780.

"Dear sir,—Well, I had resolved to send you the Chesterfield letter[6], but I will write once again without it. Never impose tasks upon mortals. To require two things is the way to have them both undone.

"For the difficulties which you mention in your affairs, I am sorry; but difficulty is now very general: it is not therefore less grievous, for there is less hope of help. I pretend not to give you advice, not knowing the state of your affairs; and general counsels about prudence and frugality would do you little good. You are, however, in the right not to increase your own perplexity by a journey hither; and I hope that by staying at home you will please your father.

"Poor dear Beauclerk—*nec, ut soles, dabis joca.* His wit and his folly, his acuteness and maliciousness, his merriment and reasoning, are now over. Such another will not often be found among mankind. He directed himself to be buried by the side of his mother, an instance of tenderness which I hardly expected. He has left his children to the care of Lady Di, and if she dies, of Mr. Langton, and of Mr. Leicester his relation, and a man of good character. His library has been offered to sale to the Russian ambassador[7].

"Dr. Percy, notwithstanding all the noise of the newspapers, has had no literary loss[8]. Clothes and moveables were

[1] [At this period a gaming club.—Ed.]

[2] [Sir William Jones.—Ed.]

[3] [The bookseller.—Ed.]

[4] [The reader will observe Mr. Beauclerk's estimate of Boswell's conversation.—Ed.]

[5] [Probably "The School for Wives."—Ed.]

[6] [See it *ante*, vol. i. p. 112.—Ed.]

[7] His library was sold by publick auction in April and May, 1781, for £5011.—Malone.

[8] By a fire in Northumberland-house, where he had an apartment in which I have passed many an agreeable hour.—Boswell. ["It has been asserted that Dr. Percy sustained grea[t] loss[es]

burnt to the value of about one hundred pounds; but his papers, and I think his books, were all preserved.

"Poor Mr. Thrale has been in extreme danger from an apoplectical disorder, and recovered, beyond the expectation of his physicians: he is now at Bath, that his mind may be quiet, and Mrs. Thrale and Miss are with him.

"Having told you what has happened to your friends, let me say something to you of yourself. You are always complaining of melancholy, and I conclude from those complaints that you are fond of it. No man talks of that which he is desirous to conceal, and every man desires to conceal that of which he is ashamed. Do not pretend to deny it; *manifestum habemus furem.* Make it an invariable and obligatory law to yourself, never to mention your own mental diseases. If you are never to speak of them, you will think on them but little; and if you think little of them, they will molest you rarely. When you talk of them, it is plain that you want either praise or pity: for praise there is no room, and pity will do you no good; therefore, from this hour speak no more, think no more, about them.

"Your transaction with Mrs. Stewart[1] gave me great satisfaction. I am much obliged to you for your attention. Do not lose sight of her. Your countenance may be of great credit, and of consequence of great advantage to her. The memory of her brother is yet fresh in my mind: he was an ingenious and worthy man.

"Please to make my compliments to your lady and to the young ladies. I should like to see them, pretty loves! I am, dear sir, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mrs. Thrale being now at Bath with her husband, the correspondence between Johnson and her was carried on briskly, * * * [2] ED. [and affords us all the information which we have of this portion of his domestic life.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 6th April, 1780[3].

"I have not quite neglected my *Lives*. *Addison* is a long one, but it is done. *Prior* is not short, and that is done too. I am upon *Rowe*, which cannot fill much paper. Letters, vol. ii. p. 96.

"Seward (Mr. William) called on me one day and read Spence[4]. I dined yesterday at Mr. Jodrell's in a great deal of company. On Sunday I dine with Dr. Lawrence, and at night go to Mrs. Vesey. I have had a little cold, or two, or three; but I did not much mind them, for they were not very bad."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"London, 8th April, 1780.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am indeed but a sluggish correspondent, and know not whether I shall much mend: however, I will try. Pearson MSS

"I am glad that your oysters proved good, for I would have every thing good that belongs to you; and would have your health good, that you may enjoy the rest. My health is better than it has been for some years past; and, if I see Lichfield again, I hope to walk about it.

"Your brother's request I have not forgotten. I have bought as many volumes as contain about an hundred and fifty sermons, which I will put in a box, and get Mr. Mathias to send him. I shall add a letter.

"We have been lately much alarmed at Mr. Thrale's. He has had a stroke, like that of an apoplexy; but he has at last got so well as to be at Bath, out of the way of trouble and business, and is likely to be in a short time quite well.

"I hope all the Lichfield ladies are quite well, and that every thing is prosperous among them.

"A few weeks ago I sent you a little stuff-gown, such as is all the fashion at this time. Yours is the same with Mrs. Thrale's, and Miss bought it for us. These stuffs are very cheap, and are thought very pretty.

"Pray give my compliments to Mr. Pearson, and to every body, if any such body there be, that cares about me.

"I am now engaged about the rest of the

at the fire at Northumberland-house; but I was present when his apartments were in flames, and can explicitly declare that all his books and papers were safely removed."—*Cradock's Memoirs*, p. 43.—ED.]

[1] [See *ante*, p. 225.—ED.]

[2] [Here Mr. Boswell had prefaced the introduction of the letter of the 28th April by the following words: "I shall present my readers with one of her original letters to him at this time, which will amuse them probably more than those well-written, but studied epistles which she has inserted in her collection, because it exhibits the easy vivacity of their literary intercourse. It is also of value as a key to Johnson's answer, which she has printed by itself, and of which I shall subjoin extracts." This insinuation against Mrs. Thrale is quite unfounded: her letters are certainly any thing but *studied epistles;* and that one which Mr. Boswell has published is not more easy and unaffected, nor in any respect of a different character from those she herself has given.—ED.]

[3] [Dated in Mrs. Thrale's volume 1779 by mistake.—ED.]

[4] [Spence's very amusing anecdotes, which had been lent Johnson in manuscript: they were not printed till 1820.—ED.]

Lives, which I am afraid will take some time, though I purpose to use despatch; but something or other always hinders. I have a great number to do, but many of them will be short.

'I have lately had colds: the first was pretty bad, with a very troublesome and frequent cough; but by bleeding and physick it was sent away. I have a cold now, but not bad enough for bleeding.

"For some time past, and indeed ever since I left Lichfield last year, I have abated much of my diet, and am, I think, the better for abstinence. I can breathe and move with less difficulty; and I am as well as people of my age commonly are. I hope we shall see one another again some time this year. I am, dear love, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"11th April, 1780.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 99-126. "On Sunday I dined with poor Lawrence, who is deafer than ever. When he was told that Dr. Moisy visited Mr. Thrale, he inquired for what, and said that there was nothing to be done which Nature would not do for herself. On Sunday evening I was at Mr. Vesey's, and there was inquiry about my *master;* but I told them all good. There was Dr. Barnard of Eton, and we made a noise all the evening: and there was Pepys, and Wraxal till I drove him away.

* * * * * *

"[Miss] Burney said she would write—she told you a fib. She writes nothing to me. She can write home fast enough. I have a good mind not to let her know that Dr. Barnard, to whom I had recommended her novel [1], speaks of it with great commendation; and that the copy which she lent me has been read by Dr. Lawrence three times over. And yet what a gipsy it is! She no more minds me than if I were a Brangton.

* * * * * * *

"You are at all places of high resort, and bring home hearts by dozens; while I am seeking for something to say of men about whom I know nothing but their verses, and sometimes very little of *them*. Now I have begun, however, I do not despair of making an end. Mr. Nicholls holds that Addison is the most *taking* of all that I have done. I doubt they will not be done before you come away.

"Now you think yourself the first writer in the world for a letter about nothing. Can you write such a letter as this? so miscellaneous, with such noble disdain of regularity, like Shakspeare's works? such graceful negligence of transition, like the ancient enthusiast? The pure voice of nature and of friendship. Now of whom shall I proceed to speak? Of whom but Mrs. Montagu? Having mentioned Shakspeare and Nature does not the name of Montagu force itself upon me [2]? Such were the transitions of the ancients, which now seem abrupt because the intermediate idea is lost to modern understandings."

"15th April, 1780.

"I thought to have finished Rowe's Life to-day, but I have had five or six visiters who hindered me; and I have not been quite well. Next week I hope to despatch four or five of them."

"18th April, 1780.

"You make verses, and they are read in publick, and I know nothing about them. This very crime, I think, broke the link of amity between Richardson and Miss M———[3], after a tenderness and confidence of many years."

"London, 25th April, 1780.

"How do you think I live? On Thursday I dined with Hamilton [4], and went thence to Mrs. Ord [5]. On Friday, with much company, at Mrs. Reynolds's. On Saturday at Dr. Bell's. On Sunday at Dr. Burney's, with your two sweets from Kennington, who are both well: at night came Mrs. Ord, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Greville, &c. On Monday with Reynolds; at night with Lady Lucan; to-day with Mr. Langton; to-morrow with the Bishop of St. Asaph; on Thursday with Mr. Bowles; Friday ———; Saturday at the academy [6]; Sunday with Mr. Ramsay.

"I told Lady Lucan how long it was since she sent to me; but she said I must consider how the world rolls about her.

* * * * * * *

"I not only scour the town from day to day, but many visiters come to me in the morning, so that my work makes no great

[1] [Evelina.—ED.]

[2] [Compare this with two former phrases, in which Shakspeare and Mrs. Montagu are mentioned (*ante*, vol. i. p. 260), and wonder at the inconsistencies to which the greatest genius and the highest spirit may be reduced!—ED.]

[3] [Probably Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone, one of Richardson's female coterie.—ED.]

[4] [Probably the Right Honourable W. G. Hamilton.—ED.]

[5] [This lady (a celebrated *blue stocking* of her day) was Miss Anne Dillingham, the only daughter of Mr. Dillingham, an eminent surgeon. She was early married to Mr. Ord, of Northumberland, who, on his decease, left her a very large property. She died in May, 1808, at the age of 82. See *Gent. Mag.* for July, 1808.—ED.]

[6] [The annual dinner on opening the Exhibition.—ED.]

progress, but I will try to quicken it. I should certainly like to bustle a little among you, but I am unwilling to quit my post till I have made an end."]

"MRS. THRALE TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Bath, Friday, 28th April.

"I had a very kind letter from you yesterday, dear sir, with a most circumstantial date[1].

"Yesterday's evening was passed at Mrs. Montagu's. There was Mr. Melmoth[2]. I do not like him *though*, nor he me. It was expected we should have pleased each other: he is, however, just tory enough to hate the Bishop of Peterborough[3] for whiggism, and whig enough to abhor you for toryism.

"Mrs. Montagu flattered him finely; so he had a good afternoon on 't. This evening we spend at a concert. Poor Queeney's sore eyes have just released her: she had a long confinement, and could neither read nor write, so my *master* treated her, very good-naturedly, with the visits of a young woman in this town, a tailor's daughter, who professes musick, and teaches so as to give six lessons a day to ladies, at five and threepence a lesson. Miss Burney says she is a great performer; and I respect the wench for getting her living so prettily. She is very modest and pretty-mannered, and not seventeen years old.

"You live in a fine whirl indeed. If I did not write regularly, you would half forget me, and that would be very wrong, for I *felt* my regard for you in my *face* last night, when the criticisms were going on.

"This morning it was all connoisseurship. We went to see some pictures painted by a gentleman-artist, Mr. Taylor, of this place. *My master* makes one every where, and has got a good dawdling companion to ride with him now. * * * * He looks well enough, but I have no notion of health for a man whose mouth cannot be sewed up. Burney and I and Queeney tease him every meal he eats, and Mrs. Montagu is quite serious with him; but what *can* one do? He will eat, I think; and if he does eat, I know he will not live. It makes me very unhappy, but I must bear it. Let me always have your friendship. I am, most sincerely, dear sir, your faithful servant, "H. L. T."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 1st May, 1780.

"DEAREST MADAM,—Mr. Thrale never will live abstinently, till he can persuade himself to live by rule[4]. * * * * Encourage, as you can, the musical girl.

"Nothing is more common than mutual dislike, where mutual approbation is particularly expected. There is often on both sides a vigilance not over-benevolent; and as attention is strongly excited, so that nothing drops unheeded, any difference in taste or opinion, and some difference where there is no restraint will commonly appear, immediately generates dislike.

"Never let criticisms operate on your face or your mind; it is very rarely that an authour is hurt by his criticks. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the socket. A very few names may be considered as perpetual lamps that shine unconsumed. From the authour of 'Fitzosborne's Letters' I cannot think myself in much danger. I met him only once about thirty years ago, and in some small dispute reduced him to whistle. Having not seen him since, that is the last impression. Poor Moore, the fabulist, was one of the company.

"Mrs. Montagu's long stay, against her own inclination, is very convenient. You would, by your own confession, want a companion; and she is *par pluribus*. Conversing with her you may *find variety in one*.

["At Mrs. Ord's I met one Mrs. B——[5] a travelled lady, of great spirit, and some consciousness of her own abilities. We had a contest of gallantry an hour long, so much to the diversion of the company, that, at Ramsay's, last night, in a crowded room, they would have pitted us again There were Smelt and the Bishop of St. Asaph, who comes to every place; and Lord Monboddo, and Sir Joshua, and ladies out of tale.

"The exhibition, how will you do, either to see or not to see! The exhibition is eminently splendid. There is *contour*, and *keeping*, and *grace*, and *expression*, and all the varieties of artificial excellence. The apartments were truly very noble. The pictures, for the sake of a skylight, are at the top of the house: there we dined, and I sat over against the Archbishop of York."

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 7th May, 1780.

"I dined on Wednesday with Mr. Fitzmaurice, who almost made me promise to pass part of the summer at Llewenny

[1] [This alludes to Johnson's frequent advice to her and Miss Thrale to *date* their letters; a laudable habit, which, however, he himself did not always practise.—ED.]

[2] [William Melmoth, the author of Fitzosborne's Letters, and the translator of the Letters of Pliny and Cicero, and some of the minor works of the latter. He was about Johnson's age, but long survived him, dying in 1799, ætat. 89.—ED.]

[3] Dr John Hinchcliffe.—BOSWELL.

[4] I have taken the liberty to leave out a few lines.—BOSWELL.

[5] [The editor would have supposed this to have been Mrs. Boscawen, but that Johnson appears to have met this lady two years before. See *ante*, p. 191.—ED.]

To-morrow I dine with Mrs. Southwel; and on Thursday with Lord Lucan. To-night I go to Miss Monkton's[1]. Then I scramble, when you do not quite shut me up; but I am miserably under petticoat government, and yet am not very weary, nor much ashamed."

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 8th May, 1780.

"I dine on Thursday at Lord Lucan's, and on Saturday at Lady Craven's; and I dined yesterday with Mrs. Southwel.

"As to my looks at the Academy, I was not told of them; and as I remember, I was very well, and I am well enough now."

"MRS. THRALE TO DR. JOHNSON.

"9th May, 1780.

"When did I ever plague you about *contour*, and *grace*, and *expression*? I have dreaded them all three since that hapless day at Compeigne, when you teased me so, and Mr. Thrale made what I hoped would have proved a lasting peace; but French ground is unfavourable to fidelity perhaps, and so now you begin again: after having taken five years' breath, you might have done more than this. Say another word, and I will bring up afresh the history of your exploits at St. Denys, and how cross you were for nothing—but somehow or other, our travels never make any part either of our conversation or correspondence. * * *

"Mr. Fitzmaurice is always civiller both to you and me than either of us deserve. I wonder (as the phrase is) what he sees in us? Not much politeness surely.

"Shall we have some chat about the Lives now? That of Blackmore will be very entertaining, I dare say, and he will be rescued from the old wits who worried him, much to your disliking: so a little for love of his christianity, a little for love of his physick, a little for love of his courage, and a little for love of contradiction, you will save him from his malevolent criticks, and, perhaps, do him the honour to devour him yourself—as a lion is said to take a great bull now and then from the wolves which had fallen upon him in the desert, and gravely eat him up for his own dinner."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London, 9th May, 1780.

"My *Lives* creep on. I have done *Addison, Prior, Rowe, Granville, Sheffield, Collins, Pitt*, and almost *Fenton*. I design to take *Congreve* next into my hand. I hope to have done before you can come home, and then whither shall I go?

* * * * * *

"Did I tell you that Scot and Jones[2] both offer themselves to represent the university in the place of Sir Roger Newdigate? They are struggling hard for what others think neither of them will obtain."]

On the 2d of May I wrote to him, and requested that we might have another meeting somewhere in the north of England in the autumn of this year.

From Mr. Langton I received soon after this time a letter, of which I extract a passage, relative both to Mr. Beauclerk and Dr. Johnson.

Langton. "The melancholy information you have received concerning Mr. Beauclerk's death is true. Had his talents been directed in any sufficient degree as they ought, I have always been strongly of opinion that they were calculated to make an illustrious figure; and that opinion, as it had been in part formed upon Dr. Johnson's judgment, receives more and more confirmation by hearing what, since his death, Dr. Johnson has said concerning them. A few evenings ago he was at Mr. Vesey's, where Lord Althorpe[3], who was one of a numerous company there, addressed Dr. Johnson on the subject of Mr. Beauclerk's death, saying, 'Our Club has had a great loss since we met last.' He replied 'A loss that perhaps the whole nation could not repair!' The Doctor then went on to speak of his endowments, and particularly extolled the wonderful ease with which he uttered what was highly excellent. He said, 'that no man ever was so free, when he was going to say a good thing, from a *look* that expressed that it was coming;

[1] [The Honourable Mary Monkton, daughter of the first Viscount Galway, married in 1786 to Edmund, 7th Earl of Corke and Orrery. Some peerages state her to have been born in April, 1747, and her ladyship still mixes in society with health and spirits very extraordinary at the age of eighty-three; but Lodge's "Peerage of Ireland" makes her still older, stating her birth to have been in *April*, 1737. The dates, even in the best peerages, are so liable to errour, that the Editor would not have paid much attention to this one, but that he has found it corroborated by an announcement in the *Gentleman's Magazine for April*, 1737, that Lady Galway was delivered of a *daughter*, and it does not any where appear that there was any *other* daughter. If Lady Corke was the *only* daughter, there can be no doubt on the subject, for the statement in the Magazine, published at the very time, cannot be erroneous in point of date.—Ed.]

[2] [Lord Stowell and Sir William Jones. Lord Stowell was elected for the University of Oxford in 1801, and represented it till his promotion to the peerage in 1821.—Ed.]

[3] [John-George, second Earl Spencer, who has been so kind as to answer some of the Editor's inquiries relative to the *society*, of which he and Lord Stowell are now almost the only survivors —Ed.]

or, when he had said it, from a look that expressed that it had come.' At Mr. Thrale's, some days before, when we were talking on the same subject, he said, referring to the same idea of his wonderful facility, 'that Beauclerk's talents were those which he had felt himself more disposed to envy, than those of any whom he had known.'

"On the evening I have spoken of above, at Mr. Vesey's, you would have been much gratified, as it exhibited an instance of the high importance in which Dr. Johnson's character is held, I think even beyond any I ever before was witness to. The company consisted chiefly of ladies; among whom were the Duchess Dowager of Portland [1], the Duchess of Beaufort, whom, I suppose from her rank, I must name before her mother, Mrs. Boscawen [2], and her eldest sister, Mrs. Lewson, who was likewise there; Lady Lucan [3], Lady Clermont [4], and others of note both for their station and understandings. Among other gentlemen were Lord Althorpe, whom I have before named, Lord Macartney, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Lord Lucan, Mr. Wraxal, whose book you have probably seen, 'The Tour to the Northern Parts of Europe,' a very agreeable, ingenious man, Dr. Warren, Mr. Pepys, the master in chancery, whom, I believe, you know, and Dr. Barnard, the provost of Eton [5]. As soon as Dr. Johnson was come in, and *had taken the chair*, the company began to collect round him till they became not less than four, if not five deep; those behind standing, and listening over the heads of those that were sitting near him. The conversation for some time was chiefly between Dr Johnson and the provost of Eton, while the others contributed occasionally their remarks. Without attempting to detail the particulars of the conversation, which, perhaps, if I did, I should spin my account out to a tedious length, I thought, my dear sir, this general account of the respect with which our valued friend was attended to might be acceptable."

[The formal style of the following letter [6], compared with that of his former correspondence with Mr. Thomas Warton, plainly proves that a coolness or misunderstanding had taken place between them. The reader will not have forgotten the ridicule with which Johnson had lately treated Warton's poems [7]. ED.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. THOMAS WARTON.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 9th May, 1780.

"SIR,—I have your pardon to ask for an involuntary fault. In a parcel sent from Mr. Boswell I found the enclosed letter, which, without looking on the direction, I broke open; but, finding I did not understand it, soon saw it belonged to you. I am sorry for this appearance of a fault, but believe me it is only the appearance. I did not read enough of the letter to know its purport. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON." MS.

In Dr. Wooll's Memoirs of Dr. Warton we find the following statement: "The disagreement which took place after a long and warm friendship between Johnson and [Joseph] Warton is much to be lamented: it occurred at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, as I am told by one of the company, who only overheard the following conclusion of the dispute: JOHNSON. 'Sir, I am not used to be contradicted.' WARTON. 'Better for yourself and friends, sir, if you were: our admiration could not be increased, but our love might.' The party interfered, and the conversation was stopped. A coolness, however, from that time took place, and was increased by many trifling circumstances, which, before this dispute, would, perhaps, have not been attended to." The style, however, of the following letter to Dr. Warton, written so late in Dr. Johnson's life, leads ED. Wooll's Life of Warton, p. 98. ED.

[1] [Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, only child of the second Earl of Oxford and Mortimer; married in 1734 to the second Duke of Portland. She was the heiress of three great families: herself of the Harleys; her mother (the Lady Harriet of Prior) was the heiress of John Holles, Duke of Newcastle; and *her* mother again, the heiress of Henry Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle. "The Duchess of Portland inherited," says the peerage, "the spirit of her ancestors in her patronage of literature and the arts." Her birth was congratulated by Swift, and her childhood celebrated by Prior in the well-known nursery lines beginning

"My noble, lovely, little Peggy."

The duchess died in 1785.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 184. Mrs. Boscawen and her daughters, Mrs. Leveson Gower and the Duchess of Beaufort, are celebrated in Miss Hannah More's poem entitled "Sensibility," who, speaking of Mrs. Boscawen, says that she

"——views, enamoured, in her beauteous race,
All Leveson's sweetness and all Beaufort's grace."—ED.]

[3] [Margaret Smith; married in 1760 the first Lord Lucan.—ED.]

[4] [Frances Murray; married in 1752 to the first Lord Clermont.—ED.]

[5] [See, *ante*, p. 229, Johnson's own account of this evening. The gentle and good-natured Langton does not hint at his having *driven away* "the *very agreeable and ingenious* Mr. Wraxal."—ED.]

[6] [From the MS. which has been communicated to the Editor.—ED.]

[7] [*Ante*, p. 113.—ED.]

us to hope that the difference recorded by Dr. Wooll was transient.

"DR. JOHNSON TO DR. WARTON.
"23d May, 1780.

MS. "DEAR SIR,—It is unnecessary to tell you how much I was obliged by your useful memorials. The shares of Fenton and Broome in the Odyssey I had before from Mr. Spence. Dr. Warburton did not know them. I wish to be told, as the question is of great importance in the poetical world, whence you had your intelligence; if from Spence, it shows at least his consistency: if from any other, it confers corroboration. If any thing useful to me should occur, I depend upon your friendship.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to the ladies of your house, and to the gentleman that honoured me with the Greek Epigrams, when I had, what I hope some time to have again, the pleasure of spending a little time with you at Winchester. I am, dear sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

["TO MRS. THRALE.
"23d May, 1780.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 127, 137. "But [Mrs. Montagu] and you have had, with all your adulation, nothing finer said of you than was said last Saturday night of Burke and me. We were at the Bishop of ———'s [1], (a bishop little better than *your* bishop), and towards twelve we fell into talk, to which the ladies listened, just as they do to you; and said, as I heard, *there is no rising unless somebody will cry Fire!*

"I was last night at Miss Monkton's; and there were Lady Craven, and Lady Cranburne, and many ladies and few men. Next Saturday I am to be at Mr. Pepys's, and in the intermediate time am to provide for myself as I can."

"25th May.

"*Congreve*, whom I despatched at the Borough while I was attending the election, is one of the best of the little *Lives;* but then I had your conversation."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO THE REV. DR. FARMER.
"25th May, 1780.

"SIR,—I know your disposition to second any literary attempt, and therefore venture upon the liberty of entreating you to procure from college or university registers all the dates or other informations which they can supply relating to Ambrose Philips, Broome, and Gray, who were all of Cambridge, and of whose lives I am to give such accounts as I can gather. Be pleased to forgive this trouble from, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

While Johnson was thus engaged in preparing a delightful literary entertainment for the world, the tranquillity of the metropolis of Great Britain was unexpectedly disturbed by the most horrid series of outrage that ever disgraced a civilized country. A relaxation of some of the severe penal provisions against our fellow-subjects of the Catholick communion had been granted by the legislature, with an opposition so inconsiderable, that the genuine mildness of christianity, united with liberal policy, seemed to have become general in this island. But a dark and malignant spirit of persecution soon showed itself, in an unworthy petition for the repeal of the wise and humane statute That petition was brought forward by a mob, with the evident purpose of intimidation, and was justly rejected. But the attempt was accompanied and followed by such daring violence as is unexampled in history. Of this extraordinary tumult, Dr. Johnson has given the following concise, lively, and just account in his "Letters to Mrs. Thrale [2]:"

"9th June, 1780.

Letters, vol. ii. pp. 143, 144, 152-3. "On Friday [3], the good protestants met in Saint George's Fields, at the summons of Lord George Gordon; and marching to Westminster, insulted the lords and commons, who all bore it with great tameness. At night the outrages began by the demolition of the mass-house by Lincoln's Inn.

"An exact journal of a week's defiance of government I cannot give you. On Monday Mr. Strahan, who had been insulted, spoke to Lord Mansfield, who had I think been insulted too, of the licentiousness of the populace; and his lordship treated it as a very slight irregularity. On Tuesday night they pulled down Fielding's house [4], and burnt his goods in the street. They had gutted on Monday Sir George Savile's house, but the building was saved. On Tuesday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate to demand their

[1] [The Bishop of St. Asaph's, of whose too constant appearance in general society Dr Johnson disapproved.—ED.]

[2] Vol. i. p. 282. I have selected passages from several letters, without mentioning dates.—BOSWELL. [The Editor has restored the dates and remarkable omission.—ED.]

[3] June 2.—BOSWELL.

[4] This is not quite correct. Sir John Fielding was, I think, then dead. It was Justice Hyde's house, in St. Martin's-street, Leicester-fields, that was gutted, and his goods burnt in the street.—BLAKEWAY. [Sir John Fielding did not die till the following September, and his house was certainly attacked and plundered.—ED.]

companions, who had been seized demolishing the chapel. The keeper could not release them but by the mayor's permission, which he went to ask: at his return he found all the prisoners released, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomsbury, and fastened upon Lord Mansfield's house, which they pulled down; and as for his goods, they totally burnt them. They have since gone to Caen-wood, but a guard was there before them. They plundered some papists, I think, and burnt a mass-house, in Moorfields, the same night.

"On Wednesday I walked with Dr. Scot[1] to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the protestants were plundering the sessions-house at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and Wood street Compter, and Clerkenwell Bridewell, and released all the prisoners.

"At night they set fire to the Fleet, and to the King's Bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful. Some people were threatened: Mr. Strahan advised me to take care of myself. Such a time of terror you have been happy in not seeing.

"The king said in council, 'That the magistrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own;' and a proclamation was published, directing us to keep our servants within doors, as the peace was now to be preserved by force. The soldiers were sent out to different parts, and the town is now at quiet.

"[What has happened at your house you will know; the harm is only a few butts of beer; and, I think, you may be sure that the danger is over. There is a body of soldiers at St. Margaret's Hill."]

"10th June, 1780.

"The soldiers are stationed so as to be every where within call. There is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to the holes, and led to prison. Lord George was last night sent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day in my neighbourhood, to seize the publisher of a seditious paper.

"Several chapels have been destroyed, and several inoffensive papists have been plundered; but the high sport was to burn the gaols. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all set at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already retaken; and two pirates have surrendered themselves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned.

"Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all under the protection of the king and the law. I thought that it would be agreable to you and my *master* to have my testimony to the public security; and that you would sleep more quietly when I told you that you are safe."

"12th June, 1780.

"The public has escaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wednesday night, but in no great number; and like other thieves, with no great resolution. Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had seized the Bank on Tuesday, at the height of the panick, when no resistance had been prepared, they might have carried irrecoverably away whatever they had found. Jack, *who was always zealous for order and decency*[2], declares, that if he be trusted with power, he will not leave a rioter alive. There is, however, now no longer any need of heroism or bloodshed; no blue riband[3] is any longer worn.

["All danger here is apparently over: but a little agitation still continues. We frighten one another with seventy thousand Scots[4] to come hither with the Dukes of Gordon and Argyll, and eat us, and hang us, or drown us; but we are all at quiet."]

"14th June, 1780.

"There has, indeed, been an universal panick, from which the king was the first that recovered. Without the concurrence of his ministers, or the assistance of the civil magistrates, he put the soldiers in motion, and saved the town from calamities, such as a rabble's government must naturally produce."

Such was the end of this miserable sedition, from which London was delivered by the magnanimity of the sovereign himself. Whatever some may maintain, I am satis-

[1] [Lord Stowell.—Ed.]

[2] [At this ironical allusion to Mr. Wilkes's own proceedings in former times, he would have been the first to smile. To a gentleman who, at a still later period, was alluding to the turbulent days of *Wilkes and liberty*, and appealed for confirmation of some opinion to Mr. Wilkes, the latter, with a serious pleasantry, replied, "My dear sir, I never was a *Wilkite*."—Ed.]

[3] Lord George Gordon and his followers, during these outrages, wore blue ribands in their hats.—Malone.

[4] [Mr. Boswell had omitted this passage.— Ed.]

ted that there was no combination or plan, either domestic or foreign; but that the mischief spread by a gradual contagion of frenzy, augmented by the quantities of fermented liquors of which the deluded populace possessed themselves in the course of their depredations.

I should think myself very much to blame, did I here neglect to do justice to my esteemed friend[1] Mr. Akerman, the keeper of Newgate, who long discharged a very important trust with an uniform intrepid firmness, and at the same time a tenderness and a liberal charity which entitle him to be recorded with distinguished honour.

Upon this occasion, from the timidity and negligence of magistracy on the one hand, and the almost incredible exertions of the mob on the other, the first prison of this great country was laid open, and the prisoners set free; but that Mr. Akerman, whose house was burnt, would have prevented all this, had proper aid been sent him in due time, there can be no doubt.

Many years ago, a fire broke out in the brick part which was built as an addition to the old gaol of Newgate. The prisoners were in consternation and tumult, calling out, "We shall be burnt, we shall be burnt! Down with the gate!—down with the gate!" Mr. Akerman hastened to them, showed himself at the gate, and having, after some confused vociferation of "Hear him! hear him!" obtained a silent attention, he then calmly told them, that the gate must not go down; that they were under his care, and that they should not be permitted to escape; but that he could assure them they need not be afraid of being burnt, for that the fire was not in the prison, properly so called, which was strongly built with stone; and that if they would engage to be quiet, he himself would come in to them, and conduct them to the further end of the building, and would not go out till they gave him leave. To this proposal they agreed; upon which Mr. Akerman, having first made them fall back from the gate, went in, and with a determined resolution ordered the outer turnkey upon no account to open the gate, even though the prisoners (though he trusted they would not) should break their word, and by force bring himself to order it. "Never mind me," said he, "should that happen." The prisoners peaceably followed him, while he conducted them through passages of which he had the keys to the extremity of the gaol, which was most distant from the fire. Having by this very judicious conduct fully satisfied them that there was no immediate risk, if any at all, he then addressed them thus: "Gentlemen, you are now convinced that I told you true. I have no doubt that the engines will soon extinguish this fire: if they should not, a sufficient guard will come, and you shall be all taken out and lodged in the compters. I assure you, upon my word and honour, that I have not a farthing insured. I have left my house that I might take care of you. I will keep my promise, and stay with you if you insist upon it; but if you will allow me to go out and look after my family and property, I shall be obliged to you." Struck with his behaviour, they called out, "Master Akerman, you have done bravely; it was very kind in you: by all means go and take care of your own concerns." He did so accordingly, while they remained, and were all preserved.

Johnson has been heard to relate the substance of this story with high praise, in which he was joined by Mr. Burke. My illustrious friend, speaking of Mr. Akerman's kindness to his prisoners, pronounced this eulogy upon his character:—"He who has long had constantly in his view the worst of mankind, and is yet eminent for the humanity of his disposition, must have had it originally in a great degree, and continued to cultivate it very carefully."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 15th June, 1780.

"I was last week at *Renny's*[2] *conversatione*, and *Renny* got her room pretty well filled; and there were Mrs. Ord, and Mrs. Horneck, and Mrs. Bunbury[3], and other illustrious names, and much would poor *Renny* have given to have had Mrs. Thrale too, and Queeny, and Burney[4]; but human happiness is never perfect; there is always *une vuide affreuse*, as Maintenon complained, there is some craving void left aching in the breast. *Renny* is going to Ramsgate; and thus the world drops away, and I am left in the sultry town, to see the sun in the *Crab*, and perhaps in the *Lion*, while you are paddling with the Nereids[5]." Letters, vol. ii. p. 161, 165.

"London, 4th July, 1780.

"I have not seen or done much since I had the misfortune of seeing you go away. I was one night at Burney's. There were Pepys, and Mrs. Ord, and Paradise[6], and

[1] [Why Mr. Boswell should call the keeper of Newgate his "*esteemed friend*" has puzzled many readers; but besides his natural desire to make the acquaintance of every body who was eminent or remarkable, or even *notorious*, his strange propensity for witnessing executions probably brought him into more immediate intercourse with the keeper of Newgate.—ED.]

[2] [Miss Reynolds.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 186.—ED.]

[4] [Miss Fanny Burney, the authour of Evelina, now Madame D'Arblay.—ED.]

[5] [Mrs. Thrale was at Brighton.—ED.]

[6] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 22.—ED.]

Hoole, and Dr. Dunbar of Aberdeen, and I know not how many more; and Pepys and I had all the talk."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"Bolt-court, 16th June, 1780.

"DEAR MADAM,—I answer your letter as soon as I can, for I have just received it. I am very willing to wait on you at all times, and will sit for the picture, and, if it be necessary, will sit again, for whenever I sit I shall be always with you.

Reyn. MSS.

"Do not, my love, burn your papers. I have mended little but some bad rhymes [1]. I thought them very pretty, and was much moved in reading them. The red ink is only lake and gum, and with a moist sponge will be washed off.

"I have been out of order, but by bleeding and other means, am now better. Let me know on which day I shall come to you. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"To-day I am engaged, and only to-day."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 10th July, 1780.

"Last week I saw flesh but twice, and I think fish once: the rest was pease.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 166–173.

"You are afraid, you say, lest I extenuate myself too fast, and are an enemy to violence: but did you never hear nor read, dear madam, that every man has his *genius;* and that the great rule by which all excellence is attained, and all success procured, is to follow *genius;* and have you not observed in all our conversation that my *genius* is always in extremes—that I am very noisy or very silent, very gloomy or very merry, very sour or very kind? And would you have me cross my *genius*, when it leads me sometimes to voracity, and sometimes to abstinence? You know that the oracle said, Follow your *genius.* When we get together again (but when, alas! will that be?) you can manage me, and spare me the solicitude of managing myself.

"I stay at home to work, and yet do not work diligently; nor can tell when I shall have done, nor perhaps does any body but myself wish me to have done; for what can they hope I shall do better? Yet I wish the work was over, and I was at liberty. Would I go to Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Porter, and see the old places, and sigh to find that my old friends are gone? Would I recall plans of life which I never brought into practice, and hopes of excellence which I once presumed, and never have attained? Would I compare what I now am, with what I once expected to have been? Is it reasonable to wish for suggestions of shame, and opportunities of sorrow?"

"London, 27th July, 1780.

"I dined yesterday at Sir Joshua's with Mrs. Cholmondeley, and she told me I was the best critick in the world, and I told her that nobody in the world could judge like her of the merit of a critick.

"On Sunday I was with Dr. Lawrence and his two sisters-in-law, to dine with Mr. G———, at Putney. The doctor cannot hear in a coach better than in a room, and it was but a dull day."

"London, 1st August, 1780.

"I sent to Lord Westcote [2] about his brother's life: but he says he knows not whom to employ, and is sure I shall do him no injury. There is an ingenious scheme to save a day's work, or part of a day, utterly defeated. Then what avails it to be wise? The plain and the artful man must both do their own work. But I think I have got a life of Dr. Young [3]."]

In the course of this month my brother David [4] waited upon Dr. Johnson, with the following letter of introduction, which I had taken care should be lying ready on his arrival in London.

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 29th April, 1780.

"MY DEAR SIR,—This will be delivered to you by my brother David on his return from Spain. You will be glad to see the man who vowed to 'stand by the old castle of Auchinleck with heart, purse, and sword;' that romantick family solemnity devised by me, of which you and I talked with complacency upon the spot. I trust that twelve years of absence have not lessened his feudal attachment, and that you will find him worthy of being introduced to your acquaintance. I have the honour to be, with affectionate veneration, my dear sir, your most faithful humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

Johnson received him very politely, and

[1] [Of a poem now (by the favour of Mr. Palmer) before the Editor. Johnson read it attentively, and made numerous corrections, but after all it is not worth much.—ED.]

[2] [Brother to the first Lord Lyttelton, by which title he was afterwards himself created an English peer. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 491. *n.*—ED.]

[3] [From Mr. (afterwards Sir) Herbert Croft He died in 1816.—ED.]

[4] Now settled in London.—BOSWELL. [As Inspector of Seamen's Wills in the Navy Pay Office, from which situation he retired in 1823, and died 1826, ætat. 76.—ED.]

has thus mentioned him in a letter to Mrs. Thrale[1]:

"21st June, 1780.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 163. "I have had with me a brother of Boswell's, a Spanish merchant, whom the war has driven from his residence at Valencia. He is gone to see his friends, and will find Scotland but a sorry place after twelve years' residence in a happier climate. He is a very agreeable man, and speaks no Scotch."

ED. [Dr. Johnson had, for the last year, felt some alleviation of a troublesome disease which had long affected him; this relief he thus gratefully and devoutly acknowledged:

Sunday, June 18.—In the morning of this day last year, I perceived the remission of those convulsions in my breast which had distressed me for more than twenty years. I returned thanks at church, for the mercy granted me, which has now continued a year."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"14th August, 1780.

Letters, vol. ii p 177. "I hope you have no design of stealing away to Italy before the election, nor of leaving me behind you; though I am not only *seventy* but *seventy-one*. Could not you let me lose a year in round numbers? Sweetly, sweetly, sings Dr. Swift,

'Some dire misfortune to portend,
No enemy can match a friend.'

But what if I am *seventy-two*? I remember Sulpitius says of Saint Martin—(now that's above *your* reading)—*Est animus victor annorum, et senectuti cedere nescius.* Match me that among your own folks. If you try to plague me, I shall tell you that, according to Galen, life begins to decline from *thirty-five*[2]."]

"TO DR. BEATTIE, AT ABERDEEN.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 21st August, 1780.

"SIR,—More years[3] than I have any delight to reckon have past since you and I saw one another: of this, however, there is no reason for making any reprehensory complaint:—*Sic fata ferunt.* But methinks there might pass some small interchange of regard between us. If you say that I ought to have written, I now write: and I write to tell you, that I have much kindness for you and Mrs. Beattie; and that I wish your health better, and your life long. Try change of air, and come a few degrees southwards. A softer climate may do you both good. Winter is coming in; and London will be warmer, and gayer, and busier, and more fertile of amusement than Aberdeen.

"My health is better, but that will be little in the balance when I tell you that Mrs. Montagu has been very ill, and is, I doubt, now but weakly. Mr. Thrale has been very dangerously disordered; but is much better, and I hope will totally recover. He has withdrawn himself from business the whole summer. Sir Joshua and his sister are well; and Mr. Davies has got great success as an authour[4], generated by the corruption of a bookseller[5]. More news I have not to tell you, and therefore you must be contented with hearing, what I know not whether you much wish to hear[6], that I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 21st August, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,—I find you have taken one of your fits of taciturnity, and have resolved not to write till you are written to: it is but a peevish humour, but you shall have your way.

"I have sat at home in Bolt-court all the summer, thinking to write the *Lives*, and a great part of the time only thinking. Several of them, however, are done, and I still think to do the rest.

[1] Mrs. Piozzi has omitted the name, *she best knows why*.—BOSWELL. [Mrs. Piozzi (acting with more delicacy, both to him and others, than Mr. Boswell himself showed), has almost every where omitted names: she feared, perhaps, that Mr. Boswell might not like to see his name coupled with the designation of Scotland as a "*sorry place*."—ED.]

[2] [It may be surmised that Mrs. Thrale, at her last birth-day, was *thirty-five:* see *ante*, pp. 87 and 215.—ED.]

[3] I had been five years absent from London.—BEATTIE.

[4] Meaning his entertaining "Memoirs of David Garrick, Esq.," of which Johnson (as Davies informed me) wrote the first sentence; thus giving, as it were, the key-note to the performance. It is, indeed, very characteristical of its authour, beginning with a maxim, and proceeding to illustrate. "All excellence has a right to be recorded. I shall, therefore, think it superfluous to apologize for writing the life of a man, who, by an uncommon assemblage of private virtues, adorned the highest eminence in a publick profession."—BOSWELL.

[5] [What the expression "generated by the corruption of a bookseller" means seems not quite clear; perhaps it is an allusion to the generation of a class of insects, as if Davies, from his adversity as a bookseller, had burst into new and gaudier life as an authour.—ED.]

[6] I wish he had omitted the suspicion expressed here, though I believe he meant nothing but jocularity; for, though he and I differed sometimes in opinion, he well knew how much I loved and revered him.—BEATTIE.

"M. Thrale and his family have, since his illness, passed their time first at Bath, and then at Brighthelmstone; but I have been at neither place. I would have gone to Lichfield if I could have had time, and I might have had time if I had been active; but I have missed much, and done little.

"In the late disturbances, Mr. Thrale's house and stock were in great danger. The mob was pacified at their first invasion with about fifty pounds in drink and meat; and at their second, were driven away by the soldiers. Mr. Strahan got a garrison into his house, and maintained them a fortnight: he was so frighted, that he removed part of his goods. Mrs. Williams took shelter in the country.

"I know not whether I shall get a ramble this autumn. It is now about the time when we were travelling. I have, however, better health than I had then, and hope you and I may yet show ourselves on some part of Europe, Asia, or Africa[1]. In the mean time let us play no trick, but keep each other's kindness by all means in our power.

"The bearer of this is Dr. Dunbar of Aberdeen, who has written and published a very ingenious book[2], and who I think has a kindness for me, and will, when he knows you, have a kindness for you.

"I suppose your little ladies are grown tall; and your son has become a learned young man. I love them all, and I love your naughty lady, whom I never shall persuade to love me. When the *Lives* are done, I shall send them to complete her collection, but must send them in paper, as, for want of a pattern, I cannot bind them to fit the rest. I am, sir, yours most affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 25th August, 1780.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 190. "I have not dined out for some time but with *Renny* or Sir Joshua; and next week Sir Joshua goes to Devonshire, and *Renny* to Richmond, and I am left by myself. I wish I could say *nunquam minus*[3], &c., but I am not diligent.

"I am afraid that I shall not see Lichfield this year, yet it would please me to show my friends how much better I am grown: but I am not grown, I am afraid, less idle; and of idleness I am now paying the fine by having no leisure."]

This year he wrote to a young clergyman[4] in the country the following very excellent letter, which contains valuable advice to divines in general:

"Bolt-court, 30th August, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,—Not many days ago Dr. Lawrence showed me a letter, in which you make mention of me: I hope, therefore, you will not be displeased that I endeavour to preserve your good will by some observations which your letter suggested to me.

"You are afraid of falling into some improprieties in the daily service by reading to an audience that requires no exactness. Your fear, I hope, secures you from danger. They who contract absurd habits are such as have no fear. It is impossible to do the same thing very often without some peculiarity of manner: but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at least preserve it from being bad: to make it good, there must, I think, be something of natural or casual felicity, which cannot be taught.

"Your present method of making your sermons seems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be supposed to have sermons more their own than yours will be Take care to register, somewhere or other, the authours from whom your several discourses are borrowed; and do not imagine that you shall always remember, even what, perhaps, you now think it impossible to forget.

"My advice, however, is, that you attempt, from time to time, an original sermon; and, in the labour of composition, do not burden your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourself at one effort of excogitation, propriety of thought and elegance of expression. Invent first, and then embellish. The production of something where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy than the expansion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently your thoughts as they rise in the first words that occur; and when you have matter you will easily give it

[1] It will no doubt be remarked how he avoids the *rebellious* land of America. This puts me in mind of an anecdote, for which I am obliged to my worthy, social friend, Governour Richard Penn. "At one of Miss E. Hervey's assemblies, Dr. Johnson was following her up and down the room; upon which Lord Abington observed to her, 'Your great friend is very fond of you; you can go no where without him.' 'Ay,' said she, 'he would follow me to any part of the world.' 'Then,' said the earl, 'ask him to go with you to *America*.' "—BOSWELL. [This lady was Miss Elizabeth Hervey, daughter of William, brother of Johnson's two friends, Thomas and Henry Hervey. She was born in 1730, and died at a very advanced age, unmarried.—ED.]

[2] "Essays on the History of Mankind."—BOSWELL.

[3] ["Never less alone than when alone."—ED.]

[4] [Probably his friend, the Reverend George Strahan, who published his Prayers and Meditations.—ED.]

form; nor, perhaps, will this method be always necessary; for, by habit, your thoughts and diction will flow together.

"The composition of sermons is not very difficult. the divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer: they supply sources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place.

"What I like least in your letter is your account of the manners of your parish; from which I gather, that it has been long neglected by the parson. The Dean of Carlisle[1] who was then a little rector in Northamptonshire, told me, that it might be discerned whether or no there was a clergyman resident in a parish, by the civil or savage manner of the people. Such a congregation as yours stands in need of much reformation: and I would not have you think it impossible to reform them. A very savage parish was civilized by a decayed gentlewoman, who came among them to teach a petty school. My learned friend, Dr. Wheeler, of Oxford, when he was a young man, had the care of a neighbouring parish for fifteen pounds a year, which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience, that it compelled him to make a sermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the communion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, she only answered, that she was no scholar. He was advised to set some good woman or man of the parish, a little wiser than herself, to talk to her in a language level to her mind. Such honest, I may call them holy, artifices must be practised by every clergyman; for all means must be tried by which souls may be saved. Talk to your people, however, as much as you can; and you will find, that the more frequently you converse with them upon religious subjects, the more willingly they will attend, and the more submissively they will learn. A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable. I think I have now only to say, that, in the momentous work you have undertaken, I pray God to bless you. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

My next letters to him were dated 24th August, 6th September, and 1st October, and from them I extract the following passages:

"My brother David and I find the long indulged fancy of our comfortable meeting again at Auchinleck so well realised, that it in some degree confirms the pleasing hope of *O! preclarum diem!* in a future state.

"I beg that you may never again harbour a suspicion of my indulging a peevish humour, or playing tricks; you will recollect that when I confessed to you that I had once been intentionally silent to try your regard, I gave you my word and honour that I would not do so again.

"I rejoice to hear of your good state of health; I pray God to continue it long. I have often said that I would willingly have ten years added to my life, to have ten taken from yours; I mean, that I would be ten years older to have you ten years younger. But let me be thankful for the years during which I have enjoyed your friendship, and please myself with the hopes of enjoying it many years to come in this state of being, trusting always, that in another state, we shall meet never to be separated. Of this we can form no notion; but the thought, though indistinct, is delightful, when the mind is calm and clear.

"The riots in London were certainly horrible; but you give me no account of your own situation during the barbarous anarchy. A description of it by Dr. Johnson would be a great painting[2]; you might write another 'London, a poem.'

"I am charmed with your condescending affectionate expression, 'let us keep each other's kindness by all the means in our power:' my revered friend! how elevating is it to my mind, that I am found worthy to be a companion to Dr. Samuel Johnson! All that you have said in grateful praise of Mr. Walmsley, I have long thought of you; but we are both Tories, which has a very general influence upon our sentiments. I hope that you will agree to meet me at York, about the end of this month; or if you will come to Carlisle, that would be better still, in case the dean be there. Please to consider, that to keep each other's kindness, we should every year have that free and intimate communication of mind which can be had only when we are together. We should have both our solemn and our pleasant talk.

"I write now for the third time, to tell you that my desire for our meeting this autumn is much increased. I wrote to 'Squire Godfrey Bosville, my Yorkshire *chief*, that I should, perhaps, pay him a visit, as I was to hold a conference with Dr. Johnson at York. I give you my word and honour that I said not a word of his inviting you; but he wrote to me as follows:

"'I need not tell you I shall be happy to see you here the latter end of this month, as you propose; and I shall likewise be in hopes that you will persuade Dr. Johnson to finish the conference here. It will add to the favour of your own company, if you

[1] Dr. Percy.—BOSWELL.

[2] I had not seen his letters to Mrs. Thrale.—BOSWELL.

prevail upon such an associate, to assist your observations. I have often been entertained with his writings, and I once belonged to a club of which he was a member, and I never spent an evening there, but I heard something from him well worth remembering.'

"We have thus, my dear sir, good comfortable quarters in the neighbourhood of York, where you may be assured we shall be heartily welcome. I pray you then resolve to set out; and let not the year 1780 be a blank in our social calendar, and in that record of wisdom and wit, which I keep with so much diligence, to your honour, and the instruction and delight of others."

Mr. Thrale had now another contest for the representation in parliament of the borough of Southwark, and Johnson kindly lent him his assistance, by writing advertisements and letters for him. I shall insert one as a specimen *:

"TO THE WORTHY ELECTORS OF THE BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK.

"Southwark, 5th Sept. 1780.

"GENTLEMEN,—A new parliament being now called, I again solicit the honour of being elected for one of your representatives; and solicit it with the greater confidence, as I am not conscious of having neglected my duty, or of having acted otherwise than as becomes the independent representative of independent constituents; superiour to fear, hope, and expectation, who has no private purposes to promote, and whose prosperity is involved in the prosperity of his country. As my recovery from a very severe distemper is not yet perfect, I have declined to attend the hall, and hope an omission so necessary will not be harshly censured.

"I can only send my respectful wishes, that all your deliberations may tend to the happiness of the kingdom, and the peace of the borough. I am, gentlemen, your most faithful and obedient servant,

"HENRY THRALE."

Piozzi, p. 165. [Mrs. Piozzi exhibits Dr. Johnson in a new and unexpected character, as taking a personal part in one of Mr. Thrale's contests for the borough. "Dr. Johnson," she says, "knew how to be merry with mean people, as well as to be sad with them; he loved the lower ranks of humanity with a real affection: and though his talents and learning kept him always in the sphere of upper life, yet he never lost sight of the time when he and they shared pain and pleasure in common. A *Borough* election once showed me his toleration of boisterous mirth, and his content in the company of people whom one would have thought at first sight little calculated for his society. A rough fellow one day on such an occasion, a hatter by trade, seeing Dr. Johnson's beaver in a state of decay, seized it suddenly with one hand, and clapping him on the back with the other: 'Ah, master Johnson,' says he, 'this is no time to be thinking about *hats*.' 'No, no, sir,' replies our Doctor in a cheerful tone, 'hats are of no use now, as you say, except to throw up in the air and huzza with;' accompanying his words with the true election halloo."]

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LADY SOUTHWELL [1], DUBLIN.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London, 9th Sept. 1780.

"MADAM,—Among the numerous addresses of condolence which your great loss must have occasioned, be pleased to receive this from one whose name perhaps you have never heard, and to whom your ladyship is known only by the reputation of your virtue, and to whom your lord was known only by his kindness and beneficence.

"Your ladyship is now again summoned to exert that piety of which you once gave, in a state of pain and danger, so illustrious an example; and your lord's beneficence may be still continued by those, who with his fortune inherit his virtues.

"I hope to be forgiven the liberty which I shall take of informing your ladyship, that Mr. Mauritius Lowe, a son of your late lord's father [2], had, by recommendation to

[1] Margaret, the second daughter, and one of the co-heiresses of Arthur Cecil Hamilton, Esq. She was married in 1741 to Thomas George, the third Baron, and first Viscount, Southwell, and lived with him in the most perfect connubial felicity, till September, 1780, when Lord Southwell died; a loss which she never ceased to lament to the hour of her own dissolution, in her eighty-first year, August 16, 1802. The "illustrious example of piety and fortitude" to which Dr. Johnson alludes was the submitting, when past her fiftieth year, to an extremely painful surgical operation, which she endured with extraordinary firmness and composure, not allowing herself to be tied to her chair, nor uttering a single moan. This slight tribute of affection to the memory of these two most amiable and excellent persons, who were not less distinguished by their piety, beneficence, and unbounded charity, than by suavity of manners which endeared them to all who knew them, it is hoped, will be forgiven from one who was honoured by their kindness and friendship from his childhood.—MALONE.

[2] Thomas, the second Lord Southwell, who was born Jan. 7, 1698–9, and died in London, Nov. 18, 1766. Johnson was well acquainted with this nobleman, and said, "he was the highest bred man, without insolence, that he was ever in company with." His younger brother, Edmund Southwell, lived in intimacy with Johnson for many years. See an account of him in "Hawkins's Life of Johnson," p. 405. He died in

your lord, a quarterly allowance of ten pounds, the last of which, due July 26, he has not received: he was in hourly hope of his remittance, and flattered himself that on October 26, he should have received the whole half-year's bounty, when he was struck with the dreadful news of his benefactor's death.

"May I presume to hope, that his want, his relation, and his merit, which excited his lordship's charity, will continue to have the same effect upon those whom he has left behind; and that, though he has lost one friend, he may not yet be destitute. Your ladyship's charity cannot easily be exerted where it is wanted more; and to a mind like yours, distress is a sufficient recommendation. I hope to be allowed the honour of being, madam, your ladyship's most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

ED. [Amongst Mr. Lowe's papers was found, in Dr. Johnson's handwriting, the following draft of a letter which, no doubt, Johnson had sketched for his poor friend, and which was probably addressed to the new Lord Southwell [1]:

MS. "MY LORD,—The allowance which you are pleased to make me, I received on the ——— by Mr. Puget. Of the joy which it brought, your lordship cannot judge, because you cannot imagine my distress. It was long since I had known a morning without solicitude for noon, or lain down at night without foreseeing, with terror, the distresses of the morning. My debts were small, but many; my creditors were poor, and therefore troublesome. Of this misery your lordship's bounty has given me an intermission. May your lordship live long to do much good, and to do for many what you have done for, my lord, your lordship's, &c. "M. LOWE."]

On his birthday, Johnson has this note:

"I am now beginning the seventy-second year of my life, with more strength of body and greater vigour of mind than I think is common at that age."

But still he complains of sleepless nights and idle days, and forgetfulness, or neglect of resolutions. He thus pathetically expresses himself:

"Surely I shall not spend my whole life with my own total disapprobation."

Mr. Macbean, whom I have mentioned more than once, as one of Johnson's humble friends, a deserving but unfortunate man, being now oppressed by age and poverty, Johnson solicited the Lord Chancellor Thurlow to have him admitted into the Charter-house. I take the liberty to insert his lordship's answer, as I am eager to embrace every occasion of augmenting the respectable notion which should ever be entertained of my illustrious friend:

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.
"London, 24th October, 1780.

"SIR,—I have this moment received your letter dated the 19th, and returned from Bath.

"In the beginning of the summer I placed one in the Chartreux, without the sanction of a recommendation so distinct and so authoritative as yours of Macbean; and I am afraid, that according to the establishment of the house, the opportunity of making the charity so good amends will not soon recur. But whenever a vacancy shall happen, if you'll favour me with notice of it, I will try to recommend him to the place, even though it should not be my turn to nominate. I am, sir, with great regard, your most faithful and obedient servant,

"THURLOW."

Mr. Macbean was, however, on Lord Thurlow's nomination, admitted into the Chartreux in April, 1781; on which occasion Dr. Johnson, with that benevolence by which he was uniformly actuated, wrote the following letter, which, for the sake of connexion, may properly be introduced here: MALONE.

"TO THE REVEREND DR. VYSE, AT LAMBETH.
"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 10th April, 1781.

"REV. SIR,—The bearer is one of my old friends, a man of great learning, whom the chancellor has been pleased to nominate to the Chartreux. He attends his grace the archbishop, to take the oath required; and being a modest scholar, will escape embarrassment, if you are so kind as to introduce

London, Nov. 22, 1772. In opposition to the knight's unfavourable representation of this gentleman, to whom I was indebted for my first introduction to Johnson, I take this opportunity to add, that he appeared to me a pious man, and was very fond of leading the conversation to religious subjects.—MALONE. [Sir J. Hawkins's account is not otherwise "unfavourable" than in representing him to have been reduced to a state of poverty so abject as to be almost incredible; and the editor would have been satisfied that Hawkins had been under some mistake about this matter, had not Mr. Malone (disposed as he was to censure Hawkins, and to uphold Southwell) appeared in the foregoing note to acquiesce in *that part* of Hawkins's statement.—ED.]

[1] [Communicated to the Editor by Mr. Markland.—ED.]

him, by which you will do a kindness to a man of great merit, and add another to those favours, which have already been conferred by you on, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"17th Oct. 1780.

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to write you a letter that will not please you, and yet it is at last what I resolve to do. This year must pass without an interview; the summer has been foolishly lost, like many other of my summers and winters. I hardly saw a green field, but staid in town to work, without working much.

"Mr. Thrale's loss of health has lost him the election [1]; he is now going to Brighthelmstone, and expects me to go with him; and how long I shall stay, I cannot tell. I do not much like the place, but yet I shall go and stay while my stay is desired. We must, therefore, content ourselves with knowing what we know as well as man can know the mind of man, that we love one another, and that we wish each other's happiness, and that the lapse of a year cannot lessen our mutual kindness.

"I was pleased to be told that I accused Mrs. Boswell unjustly, in supposing that she bears me ill-will. I love you so much, that I would be glad to love all that love you, and that you love; and I have love very ready for Mrs. Boswell, if she thinks it worthy of acceptance. I hope all the young ladies and gentlemen are well.

"I take a great liking to your brother. He tells me that his father received him kindly, but not fondly: however, you seem to have lived well enough at Auchinleck, while you staid. Make your father as happy as you can.

"You lately told me of your health: I can tell you in return, that my health has been for more than a year past better than it has been for many years before. Perhaps it may please God to give us some time together before we are parted. I am, dear sir, yours, most affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND DR. VYSE, AT LAMBETH.

"30th Dec. 1780.

"SIR,—I hope you will forgive the liberty I take, in soliciting your interposition with his grace the archbishop: my first petition was successful, and I therefore venture on a second.

"The matron of the Chartreux is about to resign her place, and Mrs. Desmoulins, a daughter of the late Dr. Swinfen [2], who was well known to your father, is desirous of succeeding her. She has been accustomed by keeping a boarding-school to the care of children, and I think is very likely to discharge her duty. She is in great distress, and therefore may properly receive the benefit of a charitable foundation. If you wish to see her, she will be willing to give an account of herself.

"If you shall be pleased, sir, to mention her favourably to his grace, you will do a great act of kindness to, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Being disappointed in my hopes of meeting Johnson this year, so that I could hear none of his admirable sayings, I shall compensate for this want by inserting a collection of them, for which I am indebted to my worthy friend Mr. Langton, whose kind communications have been separately interwoven in many parts of this work. Very few articles of this collection were committed to writing by himself, he not having that habit; which he regrets, and which those who know the numerous opportunities he had of gathering the rich fruits of *Johnsonian* wit and wisdom, must ever regret. I however found, in conversation with him, that a good store of JOHNSONIANA was treasured in his mind; and I compared it to Herculaneum, or some old Roman field, which, when dug, fully rewards the labourer employed. The authenticity of every article is unquestionable. For the expression, I, who wrote them down in his presence, am partly answerable.

Langton.

"Theocritus is not deserving of very high respect as a writer; as to the pastoral part, Virgil is very evidently superiour. He wrote, when there had been a larger influx of knowledge into the world than when Theocritus lived. Theocritus does not abound in description, though living in a beautiful country: the manners painted are coarse and gross. Virgil has much more description, more sentiment, more of nature, and more of art. Some of the most excellent parts of Theocritus are, where Castor and Pollux, going with the other Argonauts, land on the Bebrycian coast, and there fall into a dispute with Amycus, the king of that country: which is as well conducted as Euripides could have done it; and the battle is well related. Af

[1] ["Mrs. Thrale felt this very acutely. When, after Mr. Thrale's death, a friend of Mr. Henry Thornton, then a candidate for Southwark, canvassed Mrs. Thrale for her interest, she replied, "I wish your friend success, and think he will have it;—he may probably come in for two parliaments, but if he tries for a third, were he an angel from heaven, the people of Southwark would cry, 'Not this man, but Barabbas.'"—*Miss Hawkins's Mem.* vol. i. p. 66.—ED.]

[2] See vol. i. p. 29.—MALONE.

terwards they carry off a woman, whose two brothers come to recover her, and expostulate with Castor and Pollux on their injustice; but they pay no regard to the brothers, and a battle ensues, where Castor and his brother are triumphant. Theocritus seems not to have seen that the brothers have their advantage in their argument over his Argonaut heroes. 'The Sicilian Gossips' is a piece of merit.

"Callimachus is a writer of little excellence. The chief thing to be learned from him is his account of Rites and Mythology; which, though desirable to be known for the sake of understanding other parts of ancient authours, is the least pleasing or valuable part of their writings.

"Mattaire's account of the Stephani is a heavy book. He seems to have been a puzzle-headed man, with a large share of scholarship, but with little geometry or logick in his head, without method, and possessed of little genius. He wrote Latin verses from time to time, and published a set in his old age, which he called '*Senilia*;' in which he shows so little learning or taste in writing, as to make *Carteret* a dactyl[1]. In matters of genealogy it is necessary to give the bare names as they are; but in poetry, and in prose of any elegance in the writing, they require to have inflection given to them. His book of the Dialects is a sad heap of confusion; the only way to write on them is to tabulate them with notes, added at the bottom of the page, and references.

"It may be questioned, whether there is not some mistake as to the methods of employing the poor, seemingly on a supposition that there is a certain portion of work left undone for want of persons to do it; but if that is otherwise, and all the materials we have are actually worked up, or all the manufactures we can use or dispose of are already executed, then what is given to the poor, who are to be set at work, must be taken from some who now have it: as time must be taken for learning (according to Sir William Petty's observation), a certain part of those very materials that, as it is, are properly worked up, must be spoiled by the unskilfulness of novices. We may apply to well-meaning, but misjudging persons in particulars of this nature, what Giannone said to a monk, who wanted what he called to *convert* him: '*Tu sei santo, ma tu non sei filosopho.*' It is an unhappy circumstance that one might give away five hundred pounds a year to those that importune in the streets, and not do any good.

"There is nothing more likely to betray a man into absurdity than *condescension*, when he seems to suppose his understanding too powerful for his company.

"Having asked Mr. Langton if his father and mother had sat for their pictures, which he thought it right for each generation of a family to do, and being told they had opposed it, he said, 'Sir, among the anfractuosities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a superstitious reluctance to sit for a picture.'

"John Gilbert Cooper related, that soon after the publication of his Dictionary, Garrick being asked by Johnson what people said of it, told him, that among other animadversions, it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of such a work, and mentioned Richardson 'Nay,' said Johnson, 'I have done worse than that: I have cited *thee*, David.'

"Talking of expense, he observed, with what munificence a great merchant will spend his money, both from his having it at command, and from his enlarged views by calculation of a good effect upon the whole. 'Whereas,' said he, 'you will hardly ever find a country gentleman, who is not a good deal disconcerted at an unexpected occasion for his being obliged to lay out ten pounds.'

"When in good humour, he would talk of his own writings with a wonderful frankness and candour, and would even criticise them with the closest severity. One day, having read over one of his Ramblers, Mr. Langton asked him, how he liked that paper; he shook his head, and answered, 'too wordy.' At another time, when one was reading his tragedy of 'Irene,' to a company at a house in the country, he left the room: and somebody having asked him the reason of this, he replied, 'Sir, I thought it had been better.'

"Talking of a point of delicate scrupulosity of moral conduct, he said to Mr Langton, 'Men of harder minds than ours will do many things from which you and I would shrink; yet, sir, they will, perhaps, do more good in life than we. But let us try to help one another. If there be a wrong twist, it may be set right. It is not probable that two people can be wrong the same way.'

"Of the preface to Capel's Shakspeare, he said, 'If the man would have come to me, I would have endeavoured to "endow his purposes with words;" for as it is, he doth "gabble monstrously[2]."'

"He related that he had once in a dream a contest of wit with some other person,

[1] [The Editor does not understand this objection, nor the following observation.—Ed.]

[2] [*Prospero* to *Caliban*. "When thou wouldst gabble like a thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes with words." *Tempest*, act i. scene 2.—Ed.]

and that he was very much mortified by imagining that his opponent had the better of him. 'Now,' said he, 'one may mark here the effect of sleep in weakening the power of reflection; for had not my judgment failed me, I should have seen, that the wit of this supposed antagonist, by whose superiority I felt myself depressed, was as much furnished by me, as that which I thought I had been uttering in my own character.'

"One evening in company, an ingenious and learned gentleman read to him a letter of compliment which he had received from one of the professors of a foreign university. Johnson, in an irritable fit, thinking there was too much ostentation, said, 'I never receive any of these tributes of applause from abroad. One instance I recollect of a foreign publication, in which mention is made of *l'illustre Lockman* [1].'

"Of Sir Joshua Reynolds, he said, 'Sir, I know no man who has passed through life with more observation than Reynolds.'

"He repeated to Mr. Langton, with great energy, in the Greek, our Saviour's gracious expression concerning the forgiveness of Mary Magdalene [2], Ἡ πιστις σου σεσωκε σε· πορευου εις ειρηνην. 'Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace [3].' He said, 'The manner of this dismission is exceedingly affecting.'

"He thus defined the difference between physical and moral truth: 'Physical truth is, when you tell a thing as it actually is. Moral truth is, when you tell a thing sincerely and precisely as it appears to you. I say such a one walked across the street; if he really did so, I told a physical truth. If I thought so, though I should have been mistaken, I told a moral truth [4].'

"Huggins [5], the translator of Ariosto and Mr. Thomas Warton, in the early part of his literary life, had a dispute concerning that poet, of whom Mr. Warton, in his 'Observations on Spenser's Fairy Queen,' gave some account which Huggins attempted to answer with violence, and said, 'I will *militate* no longer against his *nescience*.' Huggins was master of the subject, but wanted expression. Mr. Warton's knowledge of it was then imperfect, but his manner lively and elegant. Johnson said, 'It appears to me, that Huggins has ball without powder, and Warton powder without ball.'

"Talking of the farce of 'High Life below Stairs,' he said, 'Here is a farce which is really very diverting when you see it acted, and yet one may read it and not know that one has been reading any thing at all.'

"He used at one time to go occasionally to the green-room of Drury-lane theatre, where he was much regarded by the players, and was very easy and facetious with them. He had a very high opinion of Mrs. Clive's comick powers, and conversed more with her than with any of them. He said, 'Clive, sir, is a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say.' And she said of him, 'I love to sit by Dr. Johnson; he always entertains me.' One night, when 'The Recruiting Officer' was acted, he said to Mr. Holland, who had been expressing an apprehension that Dr. Johnson would disdain the works of Farquhar, 'No, sir, I think Farquhar a man whose writings have considerable merit.'

"His friend Garrick was so busy in conducting the drama, that they could not have so much intercourse as Mr. Garrick used to profess an anxious wish that there should be [6]. There might indeed be something in the contemptuous severity as to the merit of acting, which his old preceptor nourished in himself, that would mortify Garrick after the great applause which he received from the audience. For though Johnson said of him, 'Sir, a man who has a nation to admire him every night may well be expected to be somewhat elated;' yet he would treat theatrical matters with a ludicrous slight. He mentioned one evening, 'I met David coming off the stage, drest in a woman's riding-hood, when he acted in The Wonder; I came full upon him, and I believe he was not pleased.'

"Once he asked Tom Davies, whom he saw drest in a fine suit of clothes, 'And

[1] Secretary to the British Herring Fishery, remarkable for an extraordinary number of occasional verses, not of eminent merit.—Boswell. [He was an indefatigable translator for the booksellers, "having acquired a knowledge of the languages, as Dr. Johnson told Sir J. Hawkins, by living at coffee-houses frequented by foreigners." Mr. Tyers says, "that Lockman was a very worthy man, greatly beloved by his friends, and respected even by Pope;" and he adds, "that it is a pity that he who composed so many of the lives in the 'General Dictionary' should himself not have one in the Biographia."—*Rhapsody on Pope*, p. 104.—Ed.]

[2] It does not appear that the woman forgiven was Mary Magdalene.—Kearney. [In the heading of this chapter, Luke vii. it is said, "he showeth by occasion of Mary Magdalene:" but it would rather appear by the following chapter, verse 2, that she is *not* the person here mentioned.—Hall.]

[3] Luke vii. 50.—Boswell.

[4] This account of the difference between moral and physical truth is in Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding," and many other books—Kearney.

[5] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 165.—Ed.]

[6] In a letter written by Johnson to a friend in Jan. 1742-3, he says, "I never see Garrick."—Malone.

what art thou to-night?' Tom answered, 'The Thane of Ross;' which it will be recollected is a very inconsiderable character. 'O, brave!' said Johnson.

"Of Mr. Longley[1], at Rochester, a gentleman of very considerable learning, whom Dr. Johnson met there, he said, 'My heart warms towards him. I was surprised to find in him such a nice acquaintance with the metre in the learned languages; though I was somewhat mortified that I had it not so much to myself as I should have thought.'

"Talking of the minuteness with which people will record the sayings of eminent persons, a story was told, that when Pope was on a visit to Spence at Oxford, as they looked from the window they saw a gentleman commoner, who was just come in from riding, amusing himself with whipping at a post. Pope took occasion to say, 'That young gentleman seems to have little to do.' Mr. Beauclerk observed, 'Then to be sure, Spence turned round and wrote that down;' and went on to say to Dr. Johnson, 'Pope, sir, would have said the same of you, if he had seen you distilling.' JOHNSON. 'Sir, if Pope had told me of my distilling, I would have told him of his grotto[2].'

"He would allow no settled indulgence of idleness upon principle, and always repelled every attempt to urge excuses for it. A friend one day suggested, that it was not wholesome to study soon after dinner. JOHNSON. 'Ah, sir, don't give way to such a fancy. At one time of my life I had taken it into my head that it was not wholesome to study between breakfast and dinner.'

"Mr. Beauclerk one day repeated to Dr. Johnson Pope's lines,

> 'Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
> Ten metropolitans in preaching well;'
> Epist. to Sat. v. 131.

Then asked the Doctor, 'Why did Pope say this?' JOHNSON. 'Sir, he hoped it would vex somebody[3].'

"Dr. Goldsmith, upon occasion of Mrs. Lennox's bringing out a play[4], said to Dr. Johnson at the Club, that a person had advised him to go and hiss it, because she had attacked Shakspeare in her book called 'Shakspeare Illustrated.' JOHNSON. 'And did not you tell him that he was a rascal?' GOLDSMITH. 'No, sir, I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said.' JOHNSON. 'Nay, sir, if he lied, it is a different thing.' Colman slily said (but it is believed Dr. Johnson did not hear him), 'Then the proper expression should have been,—Sir, if you do n't lie, you 're a rascal.'

"His affection for Topham Beauclerk was so great, that when Beauclerk was labouring under that severe illness which at last occasioned his death, Johnson said (with a voice faltering with emotion), 'Sir, I would walk to the extent of the diameter of the earth to save Beauclerk.'

"One night at the club he produced a translation of an epitaph which Lord Elibank had written in English for his lady, and requested of Johnson to turn it into Latin for him. Having read *Domina de North et Gray*[5], he said to Dyer[6], 'You see, sir, what barbarisms we are compelled to make use of, when modern titles are to be specifically mentioned in Latin inscriptions.' When he had read it once aloud, and there had been a general approbation expressed by the company, he addressed himself to Mr. Dyer in particular, and said,

[1] [A barrister; Recorder of Rochester, father of the editor's amiable friend, the present master of Harrow. He died in 1822.—ED.]

[2] [This would have been a very inadequate retort, for Johnson's chymistry was a mere pastime, while Pope's grotto was, although ornamented, a useful, and even necessary work. Johnson has explained his views of this point very copiously in his Life of Pope; where he says, "that being under the necessity of making a subterraneous passage to a garden on the other side of the road, Pope adorned it with fossil bodies, and dignified it with the title of a grotto—a place of silence and retreat from which he endeavoured to persuade his friends and himself that care and passions could be excluded. A grotto is not often the wish or pleasure of an Englishman, who has more frequent need to solicit than to exclude the sun; but Pope's excavation was requisite as an entrance to his garden; and as some men try to be proud of their defects, he extracted an ornament from an inconvenience, and vanity produced a grotto where necessity enforced a passage." This—and a good deal more of the same tone follows—is surely treating a trifling circumstance with more pomp and verbosity than the occasion required.—ED.]

[3] [Dr. James Foster was an eminent preacher among the dissenters; and Pope professes to prefer his merit in so humble a station to the more splendid ministry of the *metropolitans*. Pope's object certainly was to vex the clergy; but Mr. Beauclerk probably meant to ask—what is by no means so clear—how these two lines bear on the general design and argument.—ED.]

[4] Probably "The Sisters," a comedy performed one night only, at Covent Garden, in 1769. Dr. Goldsmith wrote an excellent epilogue to it.—MALONE.

[5] [Lord Elibank married a Dutch lady, Maria Margaret de Yonge, the widow of Lord North and Gray. Mr. Langton mistook the phrase, which is, in the epitaph, applied to the husband, *Domino North et Gray*, and not to the lady, *Domina de North et Gray;* see "Douglas's Peerage," art. Elibank; where, however, there is no mention of the inscription having been translated into Latin by Johnson.—ED.]

[6] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 225.—MALONE.

'Sir, I beg to have your judgment, for I know your nicety.' Dyer then very properly desired to read it over again; which having done, he pointed out an incongruity in one of the sentences. Johnson immediately assented to the observation, and said, 'Sir, this is owing to an alteration of a part of a sentence from the form in which I had first written it; and I believe, sir, you may have remarked, that the making a partial change, without a due regard to the general structure of the sentence, is a very frequent cause of errour in composition [1].'

Hawk. p. 252. [The endowments of Dyer were of a most valuable kind: keen penetration and deep erudition were the qualities that so distinguished his character, that, in some instances, Johnson might almost be said to have looked up to him. Dyer was a divine, a linguist, a mathematician, a metaphysician, a natural philosopher, a classical scholar, and a critic: this Johnson saw and felt, and never, but in defence of some fundamental and important truth, would he contradict him.]

Langton. "Johnson was well acquainted with Mr. Dossie, author of a Treatise on Agriculture [2]; and said of him, 'Sir, of the objects which the Society of Arts have chiefly in view, the chymical effects of bodies operating upon other bodies, he knows more than almost any man.' Johnson, in order to give Mr. Dossie his vote to be a member of this society, paid up an arrear which had run on for two years. On this occasion he mentioned a circumstance, as characteristick of the Scotch. 'One of that nation,' said he, 'who had been a candidate, against whom I had voted, came up to me with a civil salutation. Now, sir, this is their way. An Englishman would have stomached it and been sulky, and never have taken further notice of you; but a Scotchman, sir, though you vote nineteen times against him, will accost you with equal complaisance after each time, and the twentieth time, sir, he will get your vote.'

"Talking on the subject of toleration, one day when some friends were with him in his study, he made his usual remark, that the state has a right to regulate the religion of the people, who are the children of the state. A clergyman having readily acquiesced in this, Johnson, who loved discussion, observed, 'But, sir, you must go round to other states than our own. You do not know what a Bramin has to say for himself [3]. In short, sir, I have got no further than this, every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test.'

"A man, he observed, should begin to write soon; for, if he waits till his judgment is matured, his inability, through want of practice, to express his conceptions, will make the disproportion so great between what he sees, and what he can attain, that he will probably be discouraged from writing at all. As a proof of the justness of this remark, we may instance what is related of the great Lord Granville [4]; that after he had written his letter giving an account of the battle of Dettingen, he said, 'Here is a letter, expressed in terms not good enough for a tallow-chandler to have used.'

"Talking of a court-martial that was sitting upon a very momentous publick occasion, he expressed much doubt of an enlightened decision; and said, that perhaps there was not a member of it, who, in the whole course of his life, had ever spent an hour by himself in balancing probabilities [5].

"Goldsmith one day brought to the Club a printed ode, which he, with others, had been hearing read by its authour in a publick room, at the rate of five shillings each for admission. One of the company having read it aloud, Dr. Johnson said, 'Bolder words and more timorous meaning, I think, never were brought together.'

"Talking of Gray's Odes, he said, 'They are forced plants, raised in a hot-bed; and they are poor plants: they are but cucumbers after all.' A gentleman present, who had been running down ode-writing in general, as a bad species of poetry, unluckily said, 'Had they been literally cucumbers, they had been better things than odes.' "Yes, sir,' said Johnson, '*for a hog*.'

Piozzi, p. 48, 157. [At Sir Robert Cotton's, at Llewenny, one day at dinner, Mrs. Thrale, meaning to please Dr. Johnson particularly with a dish of very young peas, said, while he was eating them, "Are not they charming?" "Perhaps," replied he, "they would be so—to a *pig* [6]."

[1] [See *post*, a similar observation quoted in reference to Johnson's alterations in the "Lives of the Poets."—Ed.]

[2] [Dossie also published, in two vols. 8vo., what was then a very useful work, entitled "The Handmaid to the Arts," dedicated to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c.—Hall.]

[3] Here Lord Macartney remarks, "A Bramin, or any cast of the Hindoos, will neither admit you to be of their religion, nor be converted to yours:—a thing which struck the Portuguese with the greatest astonishment when they first discovered the East Indies."—Boswell.

[4] John, the first Earl Granville, who died Jan. 2, 1763.—Malone.

[5] [As Mr. Langton's anecdotes are not dated, it is not easy to determine what court-martial this was; probably—as Sir James Mackintosh suggests—Admiral Keppel's, in 1780.—Ed.]

[6] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 486, *n*. It should be observed that this answer was not, as is often erroneously stated, made to the lady of the house, but was a reproach (too rude, it must be admitted)

The Lincolnshire lady [1], who showed him a grotto she had been making, came off no better. "Would it not be a pretty cool habitation in summer," said she, "Dr. Johnson?" "I think it would, madam," replied he, "for a toad."]

Langton. "His distinction of the different degrees of attainment of learning was thus marked upon two occasions. Of Queen Elizabeth he said, 'She had learning enough to have given dignity to a bishop;' and of Mr. Thomas Davies he said, 'Sir, Davies has learning enough to give credit to a clergyman.'

"He used to quote, with great warmth, the saying of Aristotle recorded by Diogenes Laertius; that there was the same difference between one learned and unlearned as between the living and the dead.

"It is very remarkable, that he retained in his memory very slight and trivial, as well as important, things. As an instance of this, it seems that an inferiour domestick of the Duke of Leeds had attempted to celebrate his Grace's marriage in such homely rhymes as he could make; and this curious composition having been sung to Dr. Johnson, he got it by heart, and used to repeat it in a very pleasant manner. Two of the stanzas were these:

'When the Duke of Leeds shall married be
To a fine young lady of high quality,
How happy will that gentlewoman be
In his Grace of Leeds's good company!

'She shall have all that's fine and fair,
And the best of silk and satin shall wear;
And ride in a coach to take the air,
And have a house in St. James's-square [2].'

To hear a man of the weight and dignity of Johnson repeating such humble attempts at poetry had a very amusing effect. He, however, seriously observed of the last stanza repeated by him, that it nearly comprised all the advantages that wealth can give.

"An eminent foreigner, when he was shown the British Museum, was very troublesome with many absurd inquiries. 'Now there, sir,' said he, 'is the difference between an Englishman and a Frenchman. A Frenchman must be always talking, whether he knows any thing of the matter or not; an Englishman is content to say nothing, when he has nothing to say.'

"His unjust contempt for foreigners was, indeed, extreme. One evening, at Old Slaughter's Coffee-house, when a number of them were talking loud about little matters, he said, 'Does not this confirm old Meynell's observation, *For any thing I see, foreigners are fools?*'

"He said, that once, when he had a violent tooth-ach, a Frenchman accosted him thus: *Ah, monsieur, vous étudiez trop.*

"Having spent an evening at Mr. Langton's with the Reverend Dr. Parr, he was much pleased with the conversation of that learned gentleman; and, after he was gone, said to Mr. Langton, 'Sir, I am obliged to you for having asked me this evening. Parr is a fair man [3]. I do not know when I have had an occasion of such free controversy. It is remarkable how much of a man's life may pass without meeting with any instance of this kind of open discussion.'

"We may fairly institute a criticism between Shakspeare and Corneille, as they both had, though in a different degree, the lights of a latter age. It is not so just between the Greek dramatick writers and Shakspeare. It may be replied to what is said by one of the remarkers on Shakspeare, that though Darius's shade had *prescience*, it does not necessarily follow that he had all *past* particulars revealed to him.

"Spanish plays, being wildly and improbably farcical, would please children here, as children are entertained with stories full of prodigies; their experience not being sufficient to cause them to be so readily startled at deviations from the natural course of life. The machinery of the pagans is uninteresting to us: when a goddess appears in

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to Mrs. Thrale for her rudeness in supposing him so great a glutton as to be *charmed* with a dish of green peas.—Ed.]

[1] [Mrs. Langton, mother of his friend.—*Malone MS. notes.* This was not meant as rudeness to the lady; but Johnson hated grottos, and thought, as he has said in his *Life* of Pope, that they were "not often the wish or pleasure of an Englishman, who has more frequent need to solicit than to exclude the sun." *Ante*, p. 245, *n.*—Ed.]

[2] The correspondent of the Gentleman's Magazine, who subscribes himself Sciolus, furnishes the following supplement: "A lady of my acquaintance remembers to have heard her uncle sing those homely stanzas more than forty-five years ago. He repeated the second thus:

'She shall breed young lords and ladies fair,
And ride abroad in a coach and three pair,
And the best, &c.
And have a house,' &c.

and remembered a third, which seems to have been the introductory one, and is believed to have been the only remaining one:

When the Duke of Leeds shall have made his choice
Of a charming young lady that's beautiful and wise,
She'll be the happiest young gentlewoman under the skies,
As long as the sun and moon shall rise.
And how happy shall,'" &c.

It is with pleasure I add that this stanza could never be more truly applied than at this present time [1792].—Boswell. [The Duke and Duchess of Leeds, to whom Mr. Boswell alludes in the latter part of this note, were Francis the fifth duke (who died in 1799), and his second wife Catherine Anguish, who still survives.—Ed.]

[3] When the corporation of Norwich applied to Johnson to point out to them a proper master for their grammar-school, he recommended Dr. Parr, on his ceasing to be usher to Sumner at Harrow —Burney.

Homer or Virgil we grow weary; still more so in the Grecian tragedies, as in that kind of composition a nearer approach to nature is intended. Yet there are good reasons for reading romances; as, the fertility of invention, the beauty of style and expression, the curiosity of seeing with what kind of performances the age and country in which they were written was delighted: for it is to be apprehended, that at the time when very wild improbable tales were well received, the people were in a barbarous state, and so on the footing of children as has been explained.

"It is evident enough that no one who writes now can use the pagan deities and mythology; the only machinery, therefore, seems that of ministering spirits, the ghosts of the departed, witches and fairies, though these latter, as the vulgar superstition concerning them (which, while in its force, infected at least the imagination of those that had more advantage in education, though their reason set them free from it) is every day wearing out, seem likely to be of little further assistance in the machinery of poetry. As I recollect, Hammond introduces a hag or witch into one of his love-elegies, where the effect is unmeaning and disgusting[1].

"The man who uses his talent of ridicule in creating or grossly exaggerating the instances he gives, who imputes absurdities that did not happen, or, when a man was a little ridiculous, describes him as having been very much so, abuses his talents greatly. The great use of delineating absurdities is, that we may know how far human folly can go: the account, therefore, ought of absolute necessity to be faithful. A certain character (naming the person), as to the general cast of it, is well described by Garrick, but a great deal of the phraseology he uses in it is quite his own, particularly in the proverbial comparisons, 'obstinate as a pig,' &c. but I don't know whether it might not be true of Lord ———[2], that, from a too great eagerness of praise and popularity, and a politeness carried to a ridiculous excess, he was likely, after asserting a thing in general, to give it up again in parts. For instance, if he had said Reynolds was the first of painters, he was capable enough of giving up, as objections might happen to be severally made, first his outline,—then the grace in form,—then the colouring,—and lastly, to have owned that he was such a mannerist, that the disposition of his pictures was all alike.

"For hospitality, as formerly practised, there is no longer the same reason. Heretofore the poorer people were more numerous, and, from want of commerce, their means of getting a livelihood more difficult; therefore the supporting them was an act of great benevolence: now that the poor can find maintenance for themselves, and their labour is wanted, a general undiscerning hospitality tends to ill, by withdrawing them from their work to idleness and drunkenness. Then, formerly, rents were received in kind, so that there was a great abundance of provisions in possession of the owners of the lands, which, since the plenty of money afforded by commerce, is no longer the case.

"Hospitality to strangers and foreigners in our country is now almost at an end; since, from the increase of them that come to us, there have been a sufficient number of people that have found an interest in providing inns and proper accommodations, which is in general a more expedient method for the entertainment of travellers. Where the travellers and strangers are few, more of that hospitality subsists, as it has not been worth while to provide places of accommodation. In Ireland, there is still hospitality to strangers in some degree; in Hungary and Poland, probably more.

"Colman, in a note on his translation of Terence, talking of Shakspeare's learning, asks, 'What says Farmer to this? What says Johnson?' Upon this he observed, 'Sir, let Farmer answer for himself: *I* never engaged in this controversy. I always said Shakspeare had Latin enough to grammaticise his English.'

"A clergyman, whom he characterised as one who loved to say little oddities, was affecting one day, at a bishop's table, a sort of slyness and freedom not in character, and repeated, as if part of 'The Old Man's Wish,' a song by Dr. Walter Pope, a verse bordering on licentiousness. Johnson rebuked him in the finest manner, by first showing him that he did not know the passage he was aiming at, and thus humbling him: 'Sir, that is not the song: it is thus.' And he gave it right. Then, looking steadfastly on him, 'Sir, there is a part of that song which I should wish to exemplify in my own life:

"'May I govern my passions with absolute sway!'"

"Being asked if Barns knew a good deal of Greek, he answered, 'I doubt, sir, he was *unoculus inter cœcos*[3].'

[1] [Not more so than the rest of the elegy (the fifth), which is certainly, in every point of view, the worst of all Hammond's productions. Johnson exposes the absurdity of modern mythology very forcibly in his Life of Hammond.—Ed.]

[2] [Perhaps Lord Corke.—Ed.]

[3] Johnson, in his Life of Milton, after mentioning that great poet's extraordinary fancy, that the world was in its decay, and that his book was to be written in an age too late for heroick poesy, thus concludes: "However inferiour to the heroes who were born in better ages, he might still be

"He used frequently to observe, that men might be very eminent in a profession, without our perceiving any particular power of mind in them in conversation. 'It seems strange,' said he, 'that a man should see so far to the right, who sees so short a way to the left. Burke is the only man whose common conversation corresponds with the general fame which he has in the world. Take up whatever topick you please, he is ready to meet you.'

"A gentleman, by no means deficient in literature, having discovered less acquaintance with one of the classicks than Johnson expected, when the gentleman left the room, he observed, 'You see, now, how little any body reads.' Mr. Langton happening to mention his having read a good deal in Clenardus's Greek Grammar[1], 'Why, sir,' said he, 'who is there in this town who knows any thing of Clenardus but you and I?[2]' And upon Mr. Langton's mentioning that he had taken the pains to learn by heart the Epistle of St. Basil, which is given in that grammar as a praxis, 'Sir,' said he, 'I never made such an effort to attain Greek.'

"Of Dodsley's 'Publick Virtue, a poem,' he said, 'It was fine *blank*' (meaning to express his usual contempt for blank verse): however, this miserable poem did not sell, and my poor friend Doddy said Publick Virtue was not a subject to interest the age.

"Mr. Langton, when a very young man, read Dodsley's 'Cleone, a Tragedy,' to him, not aware of his extreme impatience to be read to. As it went on, he turned his face to the back of his chair, and put himself into various attitudes, which marked his uneasiness. At the end of an act, however, he said, 'Come, let's have some more; let's go into the slaughter-house again, Lanky. But I am afraid there is more blood than brains.' Yet he afterwards said, 'When I heard you read it, I thought higher of its power of language; when I read it myself, I was more sensible of its pathetick effect; and then he paid it a compliment which many will think very extravagant. 'Sir,' said he, 'if Otway had written this play, no other of his pieces would have been remembered.' Dodsley himself, upon this being repeated to him, said, 'It was too much.' It must be remembered, that Johnson always appeared not to be sufficiently sensible of the merit of Otway[3].

"'Snatches of reading,' said he, 'will not make a Bentley or a Clarke. They are, however, in a certain degree advantageous. I would put a child into a library (where no unfit books are), and let him read at his choice. A child should not be discouraged from reading any thing that he takes a liking to, from a notion that it is above his reach. If that be the case, the child will soon find it out and desist; if not, he of course gains the instruction; which is so much the more likely to come, from the inclination with which he takes up the study.'

"Though he used to censure carelessness with great vehemence, he owned, that he once, to avoid the trouble of locking up five guineas, hid them, he forgot where, so that he could not find them.

"A gentleman who introduced his brother to Dr. Johnson was earnest to recommend him to the Doctor's notice, which he did by saying, 'When we have sat together some time, you 'll find my brother grow very entertaining.' 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'I can wait.'

"When the rumour was strong that we should have a war, because the French would assist the Americans, he rebuked a friend with some asperity for supposing it, saying, 'No, sir, national faith is not yet sunk so low.'

"In the latter part of his life, in order to satisfy himself whether his mental faculties were impaired, he resolved that he would try to learn a new language, and fixed upon the Low Dutch for that purpose, and this he continued till he had read about one half of 'Thomas à Kempis;' and, finding that there appeared no abatement of his power of acquisition, he then desisted, as thinking the experiment had been duly tried. Mr Burke justly observed, that this was not the most vigorous trial, Low Dutch being a language so near to our own[4]: had it been one of the languages entirely different, he might have been very soon satisfied.

"Mr. Langton and he having gone to

great among his contemporaries, with the hope of growing every day greater in the dwindle of posterity; he might still be a giant among the pigmies, *the one-eyed monarch of the blind.*"—J. BOSWELL.

[1] Nicholas Clenard, who was born in Brabant, and died at Grenada in 1542, was a great traveller and linguist. Beside his Greek Grammar (of which an improved edition was published by Vossius at Amsterdam in 1626), he wrote a Hebrew Grammar, and an account of his travels in various countries, in Latin (EPISTOLARUM LIBRI DUO, 8vo 1556)—a very rare work, of which there is a copy in the Bodleian Library. His Latin (says the authour of NOUVEAU DICTIONNAIRE HISTORIQUE, 1789) would have been more pure, if he had not known so many anguages.—MALONE.

[2] [Mr. Langton, as has been already observed, was very studious of Greek literature.—ED.]

[3] This assertion concerning Johnson's insensibility to the pathetick powers of Otway is too *round*. I once asked him, whether he did not think Otway frequently tender: when he answered, "Sir, he is all tenderness."—BURNEY.

[4] [See *ante*, p 147 and *n*.—ED.]

see a freemason's funeral procession when they were at Rochester, and some solemn musick being played on French-horns, he said, 'This is the first time that I have ever been affected by musical sounds;' adding, that the impression made upon him was of a melancholy kind.' Mr. Langton saying, that this effect was a fine one,—JOHNSON. 'Yes, if it softens the mind so as to prepare it for the reception of salutary feelings, it may be good: but inasmuch as it is melancholy *per se*, it is bad [1].'

Piozzi, p. 76. ["He delighted," says Mrs. Piozzi, "no more in music than in painting; in fact, he was almost as deaf as he was blind."]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 197. [Yet of musick, he, at another time, said, "It is the only sensual pleasure without vice."]

Langton. "Goldsmith had long a visionary project, that some time or other, when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to Aleppo, in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the East, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Dr. Johnson's company, he said, 'Of all men Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an inquiry; for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and consequently could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding barrow, which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement.'

"'Greek, sir,' said he, 'is like lace; every man gets as much of it as he can [2].'

"When Lord Charles Hay [3], after his return from America, was preparing his defence to be offered to the court-martial which he had demanded, having heard Mr. Langton as high in expressions of admiration of Johnson as he usually was, he requested that Dr. Johnson might be introduced to him; and Mr. Langton having mentioned it to Johnson, he very kindly and readily agreed; and, being presented by Mr. Langton to his lordship, while under arrest, he saw him several times; upon one of which occasions Lord Charles read to him what he had prepared, which Johnson signified his approbation of, saying, 'It is a very good soldierly defence.' Johnson said that he had advised his lordship, that as it was in vain to contend with those who were in possession of power, if they would offer him the rank of lieutenant-general, and a government, it would be better judged to desist from urging his complaints. It is well known that his lordship died before the sentence was made known.

"Johnson one day gave high praise to Dr. Bentley's verses [4] in Dodsley's Collection, which he recited with his usual energy. Dr. Adam Smith, who was present, observed, in his decisive professorial manner, 'Very well,—very well.' Johnson, however, added, 'Yes, they *are* very well, sir; but you may observe in what manner they are well. They are the forcible verses of a man of a strong mind, but not accustomed to write verse; for there is some uncouthness in the expression [5].'

[1] The French-horn, however, is so far from being melancholy *per se*, that when the strain is light, and in the field, there is nothing so cheerful! It was the funeral occasion, and probably the solemnity of the strain, that produced the plaintive effect here mentioned.—BURNEY.

[2] It should be remembered, that this was said twenty-five or thirty years ago, when lace was generally worn.—MALONE. [But even with this allowance the meaning of the phrase does not seem clear—perhaps Johnson said that Greek was like lace; every man *wears* (that is, displays) as much of it as he can.—ED.]

[See *ante*, p. 52.—ED.]

[4] Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Cowley, says, that these are "the only English verses which Bentley is known to have written." I shall here insert them, and hope my readers will apply them.

"Who strives to mount Parnassus' hill,
And thence poetick laurels bring,
Must first acquire due force and skill,
Must fly with swan's or eagle's wing.

"Who Nature's treasures would explore,
Her mysteries and arcana know,
Must high as lofty Newton soar,
Must stoop as delving Woodward low.

"Who studies ancient laws and rites,
Tongues, arts, and arms, and history,
Must drudge, like Selden, days and nights,
And in the endless labour die.

"Who travels in religious jars,
(Truth mixt with errour, shades with rays,)
Like Whiston, wanting pyx or stars,
In ocean wide or sinks or strays.

"But grant our hero's hope long toil
And comprehensive genius crown,
All sciences, all arts his spoil,
Yet what reward, or what renown?

"Envy, innate in vulgar souls,
Envy steps in and stops his rise,
Envy with poison'd tarnish fouls
His lustre, and his worth decries.

"He lives inglorious or in want,
To college and old books confined
Instead of learn'd, he's call'd pedant;
Dunces advanced, he's left behind;
Yet left content, a genuine Stoick he—
Great without patron, rich without South Sea

BOSWELL.

A different, and probably a more accurate copy of these spirited verses is to be found in "The Grove, or a Collection of Original Poems and Translations," &c. 1721. In this miscellany the last stanza, which in Dodsley's copy is unquestionably uncouth, is thus exhibited:

"*Inglorious or by wants enthrall'd*,
To college and old books confined,
A pedant from his learning call'd,
Dunces advanced, he's left behind.'

J. BOSWELL

[5] The difference between Johnson and Smith

"Drinking tea one day at Garrick's with Mr. Langton, he was questioned if he was not somewhat of a heretick as to Shakspeare. Said Garrick, 'I doubt he is a little of an infidel.' 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'I will stand by the lines I have written on Shakspeare in my prologue at the opening of your theatre." Mr. Langton suggested, that in the line,

'And panting Time toil'd after him in vain,'

Johnson might have had in his eye the passage in the 'Tempest,' where Prospero says of Miranda,

'——— She will outstrip all praise,
And make it halt behind her.'

Johnson said nothing. Garrick then ventured to observe, 'I do not think that the happiest line in the praise of Shakspeare.' Johnson exclaimed (smiling), 'Prosaical rogues! next time I write, I'll make both time and space pant [1].'

"It is well known that there was formerly a rude custom for those who were sailing upon the Thames to accost each other as they passed, in the most abusive language they could invent; generally, however, with as much satirical humour as they were capable of producing. Addison gives a specimen of this ribaldry in Number 383 of 'The Spectator,' when Sir Roger de Coverly and he are going to Spring-garden [2]. Johnson was once eminently successful in this species of contest. A fellow having attacked him with some coarse raillery, Johnson answered him thus, 'Sir, your wife, *under pretence of keeping a bawdy-house*, is a receiver of stolen goods.' One evening when he and Mr. Burke and Mr. Langton were in company together, and the admirable scolding of Timon of Athens was mentioned, this instance of Johnson's was quoted, and thought to have at least equal excellence.

"As Johnson always allowed the extraordinary talents of Mr. Burke, so Mr. Burke was fully sensible of the wonderful powers of Johnson. Mr. Langton recollects having passed an evening with both of them, when Mr. Burke repeatedly entered upon topicks which it was evident he would have illustrated with extensive knowledge and richness of expression; but Johnson always seized upon the conversation, in which, however, he acquitted himself in a most masterly manner. As Mr. Burke and Mr. Langton were walking home, Mr. Burke observed that Johnson had been very great that night: Mr. Langton joined in this, but added, he could have wished to hear more from another person (plainly intimating that he meant Mr. Burke). 'O, no,' said Mr. Burke, 'it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him.'

"Beauclerk having observed to him of one of their friends, that he was awkward at counting money; 'Why, sir,' said Johnson, 'I am likewise awkward at counting money. But then, sir, the reason is plain; I have had very little money to count.'

"He had an abhorrence of affectation Talking of old Mr. Langton, of whom he said, 'Sir, you will seldom see such a gentleman, such are his stores of literature [3], such his knowledge in divinity, and such his exemplary life;' he added, 'and, sir, he has no grimace, no gesticulation, no bursts of admiration on trivial occasions: he never embraces you with an overacted cordiality.'

"Being in company with a gentleman who thought fit to maintain Dr. Berkeley's ingenious philosophy, that nothing exists but as perceived by some mind; when the gentleman was going away, Johnson said to him, 'Pray, sir, don't leave us; for we may perhaps forget to think of you, and then you will cease to exist.'

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is apparent even in this slight instance. Smith was a man of extraordinary application, and had his mind crowded with all manner of subjects; but the force, acuteness, and vivacity of Johnson were not to be found there. He had book-making so much in his thoughts, and was so chary of what might be turned to account in that way, that he once said to Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he made it a rule, when in company, never to talk of what he understood. Beauclerk had for a short time a pretty high opinion of Smith's conversation. Garrick, after listening to him for a while, as to one of whom his expectations had been raised, turned slily to a friend, and whispered him, "What say you to this?—eh? *Flabby*, I think."—Boswell.

[1] I am sorry to see in the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh," vol. ii. "An Essay on the Character of Hamlet," written, I should suppose, by a very young man, though called "Reverend," who speaks with presumptuous petulance of the first literary character of his age. Amidst a cloudy confusion of words (which hath of late too often passed in Scotland for *metaphysicks*), he thus ventures to criticise one of the noblest lines in our lauguage:—"Dr. Johnson has remarked, that 'Time toiled after him in vain.' But I should apprehend, that this is *entirely to mistake the character*. Time toils after *every great man*, as well as after Shakspeare. The *workings* of an ordinary mind *keep pace*, indeed, with time; they move no faster; *they have their beginning, their middle, and their end;* but superiour natures can *reduce these into a point*. They do not, indeed, *suppress* them; but they *suspend*, or they *lock them up in the breast*." The learned society, under whose sanction such gabble is ushered into the world, would do well to offer a premium to any one who will discover its meaning.—Boswell.

[2] [Vauxhall.—Ed.]

[3] [See, however, *ante*, p. 66.—Ed.]

"Goldsmith, upon being visited by Johnson one day in the Temple, said to him with a little jealousy of the appearance of his accommodation, 'I shall soon be in better chambers than these.' Johnson at the same time checked him and paid him a handsome compliment, implying that a man of his talents should be above attention to such distinctions,—'Nay, sir, never mind that: *Nil te quæsiveris extra.*'

"At the time when his pension was granted to him, he said, with a noble literary ambition, 'Had this happened twenty years ago, I should have gone to Constantinople to learn Arabick, as Pococke did.'

"As an instance of the niceness of his taste, though he praised West's translation of Pindar, he pointed out the following passages as faulty, by expressing a circumstance so minute as to detract from the general dignity which should prevail:

> 'Down then from thy glittering *nail*,
> Take, O Muse, thy Dorian lyre.'

"When Mr. Vesey[1] was proposed as a member of the Literary Club, Mr. Burke began by saying that he was a man of gentle manners. 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'you need say no more. When you have said a man of gentle manners, you have said enough.'

Piozzi, p. 62. [Yet he afterwards found that gentle manners alone were *not* "*enough;*" for when Mrs. Piozzi once asked him concerning the conversational powers of Mr. Vesey[2], with whom she was unacquainted, "He talked to me," said Johnson, "one day at *the Club* concerning Catiline's conspiracy, so I withdrew my attention and thought about Tom Thumb."]

Langton. "The late Mr. Fitzherbert told Mr. Langton that Johnson said to him, 'Sir, a man has no more right to *say* an uncivil thing, than to *act* one; no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down.'

"'My dear friend, Dr. Bathurst,' said he, with a warmth of approbation, 'declared he was glad that his father, who was a West India planter, had left his affairs in total ruin, because, having no estate, he was not under the temptation of having slaves.'

"Richardson had little conversation, except about his own works, of which Sir Joshua Reynolds said he was always willing to talk, and glad to have them introduced. Johnson, when he carried Mr. Langton to see him, professed that he could bring him out into conversation, and used this allusive expression, 'Sir, I can make him *rear*.' But he failed; for in that interview Richardson said little else than that there lay in the room a translation of his Clarissa into German.

"Once when somebody produced a newspaper in which there was a letter of stupid abuse of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of which Johnson himself came in for a share, 'Pray,' said he, 'let us have it read aloud from beginning to end;' which being done, he, with a ludicrous earnestness, and not directing his look to any particular person, called out, 'Are we alive after all this satire?'

"He had a strong prejudice against the political character of Secker, one instance of which appeared at Oxford, where he expressed great dissatisfaction at his varying the old-established toast, 'Church and King.' 'The Archbishop of Canterbury,' said he, with an affected, smooth, smiling grimace, 'drinks, 'Constitution in church and state.' Being asked what difference there was between the two toasts, he said, 'Why, sir, you may be sure he meant something.' Yet when the life of that prelate, prefixed to his sermons by Dr. Porteus and Dr. Stinton, his chaplains, first came out, he read it with the utmost avidity, and said, 'It is a life well written, and that well deserves to be recorded.'

"Of a certain noble lord[3], he said, 'Respect him you could not; for he had no mind of his own. Love him you could not; for that which you could do with him every one else could.'

"Of Dr. Goldsmith he said, 'No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had.'

"He told, in his lively manner, the following literary anecdote:—'Green and Guthrie, an Irishman and a Scotchman, undertook a translation of Duhalde's History of China. Green said of Guthrie, that he knew no English, and Guthrie of Green, that he knew no French; and these two undertook to translate Duhalde's History of China. In this translation there was found, 'the twenty-sixth day of the new moon.' Now, as the whole age of the moon is but twenty-eight days, the moon, instead of being new, was nearly as old as it could be. The blunder arose from

[1] The Right Honourable Agmondesham Vesey was elected a member of the Literary Club in 1773, and died August 11th, 1786.—MALONE.

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi only says "*a gentleman.*" Mr. Malone's MS. note to the Anecdotes supplies the name. Miss Reynolds also *recollects* an anecdote of Mr. Vesey's first appearance at the Club, which proves that, however Dr. Johnson may have admired Mr. Vesey's *gentle manners*, he did not imitate them. "When a gentleman at the *Club*, on presenting his friend, said, 'This, sir, is Mr. Vesey'—'I see him,' said Dr. Johnson, and immediately turned away." *Recollections.* —ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 248, an allusion to this over civil lord.—ED.]

their mistaking the word *neuvième*, ninth, for *nouvelle*, or *neuve*, new.'

"Talking of Dr. Blagden's[1] copiousness and precision of communication, Dr. Johnson said, 'Blagden, sir, is a delightful fellow[2].'

"On occasion of Dr. Johnson's publishing his pamphlet of 'The False Alarm,' there came out a very angry answer (by many supposed to be by Mr. Wilkes). Dr. Johnson determined on not answering it; but, in conversation with Mr. Langton, mentioned a particular or two, which, if he *had* replied to it, he might perhaps have inserted. In the answerer's pamphlet, it had been said with solemnity, 'Do you consider, sir, that a house of commons is to the people as a creature is to its Creator?' 'To this question,' said Dr. Johnson, 'I could have replied, that, in the first place, the idea of a Creator must be such as that he has a power to unmake or annihilate his creature. Then it cannot be conceived that a creature can make laws for its Creator[3].'

"'Depend upon it,' said he, 'that if a man *talks* of his misfortunes, there is something in them that is not disagreeable to him; for where there is nothing but pure misery, there never is any recourse to the mention of it.'

"'A man must be a poor beast, that should *read* no more in quantity than he could *utter* aloud.'

"'Imlac, in "Rasselas," I spelt with a *c* at the end, because it is less like English, which should always have the Saxon *k* added to the *c*[4].'

"'Many a man is mad in certain instances, and goes through life without having it perceived. For example, a madness has seized a person[5], of supposing himself obliged literally to pray continually: had the madness turned the opposite way, and the person thought it a crime ever to pray, it might not improbably have continued unobserved.'

"He apprehended that the delineation of *characters* in the end of the first book of the 'Retreat of the Ten Thousand' was the first instance of the kind that was known.

"'Supposing,' said he, 'a wife to be of a studious or argumentative turn, it would be very troublesome: for instance, if a woman should continually dwell upon the subject of the Arian heresy.'

"'No man speaks concerning another, even suppose it to be in his praise, if he thinks he does not hear him, exactly as he would if he thought he was within hearing.'

"'The applause of a single human being is of great consequence.' This he said to me with great earnestness of manner, very near the time of his decease, on occasion of having desired me to read a letter addressed to him from some person in the north of England; which when I had done, and he asked me what the contents were, as I thought being particular upon it might fatigue him, it being of great length, I only told him in general that it was highly in his praise; and then he expressed himself as above.

"He mentioned with an air of satisfaction what Baretti had told him; that, meeting in the course of his studying English with an excellent paper in 'The Spectator,' one of four that were written by the respectable dissenting minister Mr. Grove of Taunton, and observing the genius and energy of mind that it exhibits, it greatly quickened his curiosity to visit our country, as he thought, if such were the lighter periodical essays of our authours, their productions on more weighty occasions must be wonderful indeed!

"He observed once, at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, that a beggar in the street will more readily ask alms from a *man*, though there should be no marks of wealth in his appearance, than from even a well-dressed *woman*[6]; which he accounted for from the great degree of carefulness as to money, that is to be found in women: saying farther upon it, that the opportunities in general that they possess of improving their condition are much fewer than men have; and adding, as he looked round the company, which consisted of men only, 'There is not one of us who does not think he might be richer, if he would use his endeavour.'

"He thus characterised an ingenious

[1] [Afterwards Sir Charles Blagden.—ED.]

[2] [Here in the first edition ended Mr. Langton's *Collectanea*.—ED.]

[3] His profound adoration of the Great First Cause was such as to set him above that "philosophy and vain deceit" with which men of narrow conceptions have been infected. I have heard him strongly maintain that "what is right is not so from any natural fitness, but because God wills it to be right;" and it is certainly so, because he has predisposed the relations of things so, as that which he wills must be right.—BOSWELL.

[4] I hope the authority of the great master of our language will stop that curtailing innovation by which we see *critic*, *public*, &c. frequently written instead of *critick*, *publick*, &c.—BOSWELL. [Why should we not retrench an obvious superfluity? In the preceding age, *public* and *critic* were written *publique* and *critique*. Johnson himself, in a memorandum among Mr. Anderdon's papers, dated in 1784, writes "*cubic* feet."—ED.]

[5] [Johnson had, no doubt, his poor friend Smart in his recollection: see *ante*, vol. i. p. 180.—ED.]

[6] Sterne is of a direct contrary opinion. See his "Sentimental Journey;" article, *The Mystery*.—BOSWELL.

writer of his acquaintance. 'Sir, he is an enthusiast by rule.'

"'*He may hold up that* SHIELD *against all his enemies*,' was an observation on Homer, in reference to his description of the shield of Achilles, made by Mrs. Fitzherbert, wife to his friend Mr. Fitzherbert of Derbyshire, and respected by Dr. Johnson as a very fine one[1]. He had in general a very high opinion of that lady's understanding.

"An observation of Bathurst's may be mentioned, which Johnson repeated, appearing to acknowledge it to be well founded; namely, it was somewhat remarkable how seldom, on occasion of coming into the company of any new person, one felt any wish or inclination to see him again."

ED. [As we now approach the period when his intimacy with Mrs. Thrale ceased, this seems to be a proper place for inserting, after the *Collectanea* of Mr. Langton, those anecdotes published by that lady which have not been introduced in other places of this work.]

Piozzi Anecdotes. ["To recollect and repeat the sayings of Dr. Johnson, is almost all that can be done by the writers of his life; as his life, at least since my acquaintance with him, consisted in little else than *talking*, when he was not absolutely employed in some serious piece of work; and whatever work he did seemed so much below his powers of performance, that he appeared the idlest of all human beings; ever amusing till he was called out to converse, and conversing till the fatigue of his friends, or the promptitude of his own temper to take offence, consigned him back again to silent meditation.

"Dr. Johnson indeed, as he was a very talking man himself, had an idea that nothing promoted happiness so much as conversation.

"The saying of the old philosopher, who observes, 'that he who wants least is most like the gods, who want nothing,' was a favourite sentence with Dr. Johnson, who on his own part required less attendance, sick or well, than ever I saw any human creature. Conversation was all he required to make him happy; and when he would have tea made at two o'clock in the morning, it was only that there might be a certainty of detaining his companions round him. On that principle it was that he preferred winter to summer, when the heat of the weather gave people an excuse to stroll about, and walk for pleasure in the shade, while he wished to sit still on a chair, and chat day after day, till somebody proposed a drive in the coach; and that was the most delicious moment of his life. 'But the carriage must stop some time,' as he said, 'and the people would come home at last;' so his pleasure was of short duration.

"As ethics or figures, or metaphysical reasoning, was the sort of talk he most delighted in, so no kind of conversation pleased him less, I think, than when the subject was historical fact or general polity. 'What shall we learn from *that* stuff?' said Johnson: 'let us not fancy like Swift that we are exalting a woman's character by telling how she

> "Could name the ancient heroes round,
> Explain for what they were renown'd, &c."
> CAD. & VANESSA.

I must not however lead my readers to suppose that he meant to reserve such talk for *men's* company as a proof of pre-eminence. 'He never,' as he expressed it, 'desired to hear of the *Punic war* while he lived: such conversation was lost time,' he said, 'and carried one away from common life, leaving no ideas behind which could serve *living wight* as warning or direction.

> "How I should act is not the case,
> But how would Brutus in my place?"

And now,' cries Dr. Johnson, laughing with obstreperous violence, 'if these two foolish lines can be equalled in folly[2], except by the two succeeding ones—show them me.'

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[1] [This passage seems not very intelligible. Perhaps the observation might mean that Homer's description of the shield of Achilles was so masterly that it alone was sufficient to prove him a great poet, and to turn all the shafts of criticism. The reader cannot have failed to observe that many of these anecdotes are very obscurely expressed, and that different topics seem sometimes jumbled into one paragraph.—ED.]

[2] [These are two lines of Swift's *Verses to Stella*, 1720. Dr. Johnson's censure was too violent, and indeed he seems not to have correctly understood the dean's illustration. He is laying down certain general rules for distinguishing what *honour* is, and he exposes the many false meanings which the world assigns to that word. He proceeds to say that men should not decide what is *honourable* by a reference to *their own* feelings and circumstances, which naturally bias the judgment, but should consider, without reference to self, how a wise and good man would act.

> "In points of honour to be tried,
> All passion must be laid aside;
> Ask no advice, but think alone:
> Suppose the question not your own
> 'How shall I act?' is not the case,
> But how would *Brutus* in my place?
> In such a case would *Cato* bleed?
> And how would *Socrates* proceed?"

It is plain here, and still plainer from the whole context of the poem, that *Brutus*, *Cato*, and *Socrates* are here put as the representatives of Patriotism and Virtue, and as the names of *Zoilus*, *Bavius*, or *Pandarus* are used generically

"With a contempt not inferior he received the praises of a pretty lady's face and behaviour. 'She says nothing, sir,' answered Johnson; 'a talking blackamoor were better than a white creature who adds nothing to life—and sitting down before one thus desperately silent takes away the confidence one should have in the company of her chair if she were once out of it.'

"No one was however less willing to begin any discourse than himself. His friend Mr. Thomas Tyers[1] said he was like the ghosts, who never speak till they are spoken to; and he liked the expression so well, that he often repeated it. He had indeed no necessity to lead the stream of chat to a favourite channel, that his fulness on the subject might be shown more clearly, whatever was the topic; and he usually left the choice to others. His information enlightened, his argument strengthened, and his wit made it ever remembered. Of him it might have been said, as he often delighted to say of Edmund Burke, 'that you could not stand five minutes with that man beneath a shed while it rained, but you must be convinced you had been standing with the greatest man you had ever yet seen.'

"Having reduced his amusements to the pleasures of conversation merely, what wonder that Johnson should have had an avidity for the sole delight he was able to enjoy? No man conversed so well as he on every subject; no man so acutely discerned the reason of every fact, the motive of every action, the end of every design. He was indeed often pained by the ignorance or causeless wonder of those who knew less than himself, though he seldom drove them away with apparent scorn, unless he thought they added presumption to stupidity.

"He would sometimes good-naturedly enter into a long chat for the instruction or entertainment of people he despised. I perfectly recollect his condescending to delight my daughter's dancing-master with a long argument about *his* art; which the man protested, at the close of the discourse, the Doctor knew more of than himself, and was astonished, enlightened, and amused, by the talk of a person little likely to make a good disquisition upon dancing.

"I have sometimes indeed been rather pleased than vexed when Dr. Johnson has given a rough answer to a man who perhaps deserved one only half as rough, because I knew he would repent of his hasty reproof, and make us all amends by some conversation at once instructive and entertaining. A young fellow asked him abruptly one day, 'Pray, sir, what and where is Palmyra? I heard somebody talk last night of the ruins of Palmyra.' ''Tis a hill in Ireland,' replies Johnson, 'with palms growing on the top, and a bog at the bottom, and so they call it *Palm-mira.*' Seeing however that the lad thought him serious, and thanked him for the information he undeceived him very gently indeed; told him the history, geography, and chronology, of Tadmor in the wilderness, with every incident, I think, that literature could furnish or eloquence express, from the building of Solomon's palace down to the voyage of Dawkins and Wood.

"He had no taste for the usual enjoyments and occupations of a country life, and would say, 'that after one had gathered apples in an orchard, one wishes to see them well baked, and removed to a London eating-house for enjoyment.' With such notions, who can wonder he often complained of us for living so much in the country—'feeding the chickens,' as he said I did, 'till I starved my own understanding.' 'Get, however,' said he, 'a book about gardening, and study it hard, since you *will* pass your life with birds and flowers, and learn to raise the *largest* turnips and to breed the *biggest* fowls.' It was vain to assure him that the goodness of such dishes did not depend upon their size; he laughed at the people who covered their canals with foreign fowls, 'when,' says he, 'our own geese and ganders are twice as large; if we fetched better animals from distant nations, there might be some sense in the preference: but to get cows from Alderney, or water-fowl from China, only to see nature degenerating round us, is a poor ambition indeed.'

"Nor was Dr. Johnson more merciful with regard to the *amusements* people are contented to call such. 'You hunt in the morning,' says he, 'and crowd to the public rooms at night, and call it *diversion;* when your heart knows it is perishing with poverty of pleasures, and your wits get blunted for want of some other mind to sharpen them upon. There is in this world no real delight (excepting those of sensuality) but exchange of ideas in conversation; and

to signify *infamous persons:* so here, *Brutus, Cato,* and *Socrates* (which might as well have been *Sydney, Somers,* or *Clarendon,* or any other illustrious names), are used as terms of honour to give point and a kind of dramatic effect to the general proposition. Swift never dreamt (as Mrs. Piozzi's report would lead us to think that Johnson supposed) to advise that *our* rules of conduct were to be drawn from the actual events of Greek and Roman history. This would have been as absurd as Johnson's own introduction of Roman manners into *London* in his description of the burning of Orgilio's palace, or the invocation of Democritus, which sounds so strangely amidst the modern illustrations of his own beautiful and splendid *Vanity of Human Wishes.*—Ed.]

[1] [See *ante,* vol. i. p. 136, and p. 175 of this vol.—Ed.]

whoever has once experienced the full flow of London talk, when he retires to country friendships and rural sports, must either be contented to turn baby again and play with the rattle, or he will pine away like a great fish in a little pond, and die for want of his usual food.'—'Books without the knowledge of life are useless,' I have heard him say; 'for what should books teach but the art of *living*? To study manners, however, only in coffee-houses, is more than equally imperfect; the minds of men who acquire no solid learning, and only exist on the daily forage that they pick up by running about, and snatching what drops from their neighbours, as ignorant as themselves, will never ferment into any knowledge valuable or durable; but like the light wines we drink in hot countries, please for the moment, though incapable of keeping. In the study of mankind much will be found to swim as froth and much must sink as feculence, before the wine can have its effect, and become that noblest liquor which rejoices the heart and gives vigour to the imagination.'

"'Solitude,' he one day added, 'is dangerous to reason, without being favourable to virtue: pleasures of some sort are necessary to the intellectual as to the corporeal health; and those who resist gaiety will be likely for the most part to fall a sacrifice to appetite; for the solicitations of sense are always at hand; and a dram to a vacant and solitary person is a speedy and seducing relief. Remember,' continued he, 'that the solitary mortal is certainly luxurious, probably superstitious, and possibly mad: the mind stagnates for want of employment, grows morbid, and is extinguished like a candle in foul air.' It was on this principle that Johnson encouraged parents to carry their daughters early and much into company; 'for what harm can be done before so many witnesses? Solitude is the surest nurse of all prurient passions; and a girl in the hurry of preparation, or tumult of gaiety, has neither inclination nor leisure to let tender expressions soften or sink into her heart. The ball, the show, are not the dangerous places: no, 'tis the private friend, the kind consoler, the companion of the easy vacant hour, whose compliance with her opinions can flatter her vanity, and whose conversation can just soothe, without ever stretching her mind, that is the lover to be feared; he who buzzes in her ear at court, or at the opera, must be contented to buzz in vain.' These notions Dr. Johnson carried so very far, that I have heard him say, 'If you would shut up any man with any woman, so as to make them derive their whole pleasure from each other, they would inevitably fall in love, as it is called, with each other; but at six months' end, if you would throw them both into public life, where they might change partners at pleasure, each would soon forget that fondness which mutual dependence and the paucity of general amusement alone had caused, and each would separately feel delighted by their release.'

"The vacuity of life had at some early period of his life struck so forcibly on the mind of Dr. Johnson, that it became by repeated impression his favourite hypothesis, and the general tenor of his reasonings commonly ended there, wherever they might begin. Such things therefore as other philosophers often attribute to various and contradictory causes, appeared to him uniform enough; all was done to fill up the time, upon his principle. I used to tell him, that it was like the clown's answer in As You Like It, of 'Oh Lord, sir!' for that it suited every occasion. One man, for example, was profligate and wild, as we call it, followed the girls, or sat still at the gaming-table. 'Why, life must be filled up,' said Johnson, 'and the man who is not capable of intellectual pleasures must content himself with such as his senses can afford.' Another was a hoarder: 'Why, a fellow must do something; and what so easy to a narrow mind as hoarding halfpence till they turn into sixpences?'

"Avarice was a vice against which, however, I never much heard Dr. Johnson declaim, till one represented it to him connected with cruelty, or some such disgraceful companion. 'Do not,' said he, 'discourage your children from hoarding, if they have a taste to it: whoever lays up his penny rather than part with it for a cake, at least is not the slave of gross appetite; and shows besides a preference always to be esteemed, of the future to the present moment. Such a mind may be made a good one; but the natural spendthrift, who grasps his pleasures greedily and coarsely, and cares for nothing but immediate indulgence, is very little to be valued above a negro.'

"He hated disguise, and nobody penetrated it so readily. I showed him a letter written to a common friend, who was at some loss for the explanation of it. 'Whoever wrote it,' says our Doctor, 'could, if he chose it, make himself understood; but 't is the letter of an *embarrassed man*, sir;' and so the event proved it to be.

"Mysteriousness in trifles offended him on every side: 'it commonly ended in guilt,' he said; 'for those who begin by concealment of innocent things will soon have something to hide which they dare not bring to light.' He therefore encouraged an openness of conduct, in women particularly, 'who,' he observed, 'were often led away, when children, by their delight and power of surprising.'

"He recommended, on something like the same principle, that when one person

meant to serve another, he should not go about it slily, or, as we say, underhand, out of a false idea of delicacy, to surprise one's friend with an unexpected favour; 'which, ten to one,' says he, 'fails to oblige your acquaintance, who had some reasons against such a mode of obligation, which you might have known but for that superfluous cunning which you think an elegance. Oh! never be seduced by such silly pretences,' continued he; 'if a wench wants a good gown, do not give her a fine smelling-bottle, because that is more delicate: as I once knew a lady lend the key of her library to a poor scribbling dependant, as if she took the woman for an ostrich that could digest iron' He said, indeed, 'that women were very difficult to be taught the proper manner of conferring pecuniary favours; that they always gave too much money or too little; for that they had an idea of delicacy accompanying their gifts, so that they generally rendered them either useless or ridiculous.'

"I pitied a friend before him who had a whining wife, that found every thing painful to her, and nothing pleasing—'He does not know that she whimpers,' says Johnson; 'when a door has creaked for a fortnight together, you may observe, the master will scarcely give sixpence to get it oiled.'

"Of another lady, more insipid than offensive, I once heard him say, 'She has some softness indeed, but so has a pillow.' And when one observed in reply, that her husband's fidelity and attachment were exemplary, notwithstanding this low account at which her perfections were rated—'Why, sir,' cries the Doctor, 'being married to those sleepy-souled women, is just like playing at cards for nothing; no passion is excited, and the time is filled up. I do not however envy a fellow one of those honeysuckle wives, for my part, as they are but *creepers* at best, and commonly destroy the tree they so tenderly cling about.'

"Needlework had a strenuous approver in Dr. Johnson, who said, 'that one of the great felicities of female life was the general consent of the world, that they might amuse themselves with petty occupations, which contributed to the lengthening their lives, and preserving their minds in a state of sanity.' 'A man cannot hem a pocket-handkerchief,' said a lady of quality to him one day, 'and so he runs mad, and torments his family and friends.' The expression struck him exceedingly, and when one acquaintance grew troublesome, and another unhealthy, he used to quote Lady Frances's[1] observation, 'that a man cannot hem a pocket-handkerchief.'

"*Nice* people found no mercy from Dr. Johnson; such I mean as can dine only at four o'clock, who cannot bear to be waked at an unusual hour, or miss a stated meal without inconvenience. *He* had no such prejudices himself, and with difficulty forgave them in another. 'Delicacy does not surely consist,' says he, 'in impossibility to be pleased; and that is false dignity indeed which is content to depend upon others.'

"That poverty was an evil to be avoided by all honest means, however, no man was more ready to avow: concealed poverty particularly, which he said was the genera corrosive that destroyed the peace of almos every family; to which no evening perhaps ever returned without some new project for hiding the sorrows and dangers of the next day. 'Want of money,' says Dr. Johnson, 'is sometimes concealed under pretended avarice, and sly hints of aversion to part with it; sometimes under stormy anger, and affectation of boundless rage; but oftener still under a show of thought less extravagance and gay neglect: while to a penetrating eye none of these wretched veils suffice to keep the cruel truth from being seen. Poverty is *hic et ubique*,' says he, 'and if you do shut the jade out of the door, she will always contrive in some manner to poke her pale lean face in at the window.'

"As the mind of Dr. Johnson was greatly expanded, so his first care was for general, not particular or petty morality; and those teachers had more of his blame than praise, I think, who seek to oppress life with unnecessary scruples. 'Scruples would,' as he observed, 'certainly make men miserable, and seldom make them good. Let us ever,' he said, 'studiously fly from those instructers, against whom our Saviour denounces heavy judgments, for having bound up burdens grievous to be borne, and laid them on the shoulders of mortal men.' No one had, however, higher notions of the hard task of true christianity than Johnson, whose daily terror lest he had not done enough originated in piety, but ended in little less than disease. Reasonable with regard to others, he had formed vain hopes of performing impossibilities himself; and finding his good works ever below his desires and intent, filled his imagination with fears that he should never obtain forgiveness for omissions of duty and criminal waste of time.

"I used to tell him in jest, that his morality was easily contented; and when I have said something as if the wickedness of the world gave me concern, he would cry out aloud against canting, and protest that he thought there was very little gross wickedness in the world, and still less of extraordinary virtue.

"Though no man perhaps made such

[1] [Lady Frances Burgoyne, daughter of the last Lord Halifax.—Ed.]

rough replies as Dr. Johnson, yet nobody had a more just aversion for general satire; he always hated and censured Swift for his unprovoked bitterness against the professors of medicine; and used to challenge his friends, when they lamented the exorbitancy of physicians' fees, to produce him one instance of an estate raised by physick in England. When an acquaintance too was one day exclaiming against the tediousness of the law and its partiality: 'Let us hear, sir,' said Johnson, 'no general abuse; the law is the last result of human wisdom acting upon human experience for the benefit of the publick.'

"Dr. Johnson had indeed a veneration for the voice of mankind beyond what most people will own; and as he liberally confessed that all his own disappointments proceeded from himself, he hated to hear others complain of general injustice. I remember when lamentation was made of the neglect shewed to Jeremiah Markland [1], a great philologist, as some one ventured to call him—'He is a scholar undoubtedly, sir,' replied Dr. Johnson; 'but remember that he would run from the world, and that it is not the world's business to run after him. I hate a fellow whom pride, or cowardice, or laziness, drives into a corner, and does nothing when he is there but sit and *growl*. let him come out as I do, and *bark*.'

"Dr. Johnson's knowledge of literary history was extensive and surprising; he knew every adventure of every book you could name almost, and was exceedingly pleased with the opportunity which writing the poets' lives gave him to display it. He loved to be set at work, and was sorry when he came to the end of the business he was about.

"'Alas, madam!' continued he, 'how few books are there of which one ever can possibly arrive at the *last* page! Was there ever yet any thing written by mere man that was wished longer by its readers, excepting Don Quixote, Robinson Crusoe, and the Pilgrim's Progress?' After Homer's Iliad, Dr. Johnson confessed that the work of Cervantes was the greatest in the world, speaking of it, I mean, as a book of entertainment.

"He had sometimes fits of reading very violent; and when he was in earnest about getting through some particular pages, for I have heard him say he never read but one book [2], which he did not consider as

[1] [Mr. Markland, who has favoured the Editor with many kind and useful suggestions, observes on this passage, that "Johnson's censure was undeserved. Jeremiah Markland was certainly no *growler*. He sought for, because he loved, retirement; and *rejected* all the honours and rewards which were liberally offered to his acceptance. During a long life, he devoted himself unceasingly to those pursuits for which he was best fitted, collating the classics, and illustrating the Scriptures. 'Sequantur alii famam, aucupentur Divitias, hic illa oculis irretortis contemplatus, post terga constanter rejecit .... In solitudinem se recepit, studiis excolendis et pauperibus sublevandis unicè intentus.' Such is the character given of Markland by his pupil and friend Edward Clarke." Mrs. Piozzi's flippant expression ("a great philologist as some one *ventured* to call him") will excite a smile, when we recollect what Markland has done as a philologist, and the estimation in which he has been held both by the most learned of his contemporaries (including Johnson himself), and the most distinguished scholars of our own time. Dr. Burney, in a tone of the highest panegyric, numbered him with Bentley, Dawes, Toup, and Porson; and a still later writer has thus candidly enumerated his merits: "Markland was endowed with a respectable portion of judgment and sagacity. He was very laborious, loved retirement, and spent a long life in the study of the Greek and Latin languages. For modesty, candour, literary honesty, and courteousness to other scholars, he is justly considered as the mode which ought to be proposed for the imitation of every critic."—*Quart. Rev.* vol. vii. p. 442 so far Mr. Markland. It is but just to all parties, that the Editor should add, that (whatever Johnson may have said in the current of conversation, and probably in allusion to some minute and unrecorded circumstance) he had a fixed respect for the talents and character of Markland. For it will be seen hereafter that on the 20th Oct. 1782, he wrote to Mr. Nichols, urging him to obtain some record of the life of Markland, whom, with Jortin and Thirlby, he calls three contemporaries of great eminence.—ED.]

[2] [On this passage Mr. Malone, in his MS. notes, says, "*Here we have another* gross exaggeration. *She does not state when he made this declaration. It might have been in* 1765, *and in the subsequent nineteen years he might have read* 500 *books through perhaps, though it certainly was not his usual custom to do so.*" Can the reader discover on what grounds the statement is called a *gross exaggeration*, wher Mr. Malone admits that it accords with Johnson's *usual custom*? But we have many passages in Boswell which corroborate Mrs. Piozzi's statement, (see for instance vol. i. p. 310, and *post*, 15th June, 1784.) The observation too as to the lady's having made no allowance for the *date* at which Johnson spoke, came rather inconsistently from Mr. Malone, who has laboriously made a deliberate blunder of the same kind that he imputes to Mrs. Piozzi: when Johnson observed, *ante*, p. 143, that "Thomas à Kempis was said to have been printed, in one language or another, as many times as there have been months since it first came out," Mr. Malone, with great gravity, informs us, "*this is improbable, because, according to this account, there would have been* 3600 *editions, that being the number of months between* 1492 *and* 1792," (*ante, loc. cit.*) Because Boswell's book was published in 1792, Mr. Malone makes his calculation on *that* year, without reference either to the year in which Johnson *quoted* the

obligatory, through in his whole life (and Lady Mary Wortley's Letters was the book), he would be quite lost to company, and withdraw all his attention to what he was reading, without the smallest knowledge or care about the noise made around him. His deafness made such conduct less odd and less difficult to him than it would have been to another man; but his advising others to take the same method, and pull a little book out when they were not entertained with what was going forward in society, seemed more likely to advance the growth of science than of polished manners, for which he always pretended extreme veneration.

"Dr. Johnson was a great reader of French literature, and delighted exceedingly in Boileau's works. Moliere, I think, he had hardly sufficient taste of; and he used to condemn me for preferring La Bruyere to the Duc de Rochefoucault, 'who,' he said, 'was the only *gentleman* writer who wrote like a professed authour.'

"The recollection of such reading as had delighted him in his infancy, made him always persist in fancying that it was the only reading which could please an infant; and he used to condemn me for putting Newbery's books into their hands as too trifling to engage their attention. 'Babies do not want,' said he, 'to hear about babies; they like to be told of giants and castles, and of somewhat which can stretch and stimulate their little minds.' When in answer I would urge the numerous editions and quick sale of Tommy Prudent or Goody Two Shoes, 'Remember always,' said he, 'that the parents *buy* the books, and that the children never read them.' Mrs. Barbauld however had his best praise[1], and deserved it; no man was more struck than Dr. Johnson with voluntary descent from possible splendour to painful duty.

"The remembrance of what had passed in his own childhood made Dr. Johnson very solicitous to preserve the felicity of children; and when he had persuaded Dr. Sumner[2] to remit the tasks usually given to fill up boys' time during the holidays, he rejoiced exceedingly in the success of his negotiation, and told me that he had never ceased representing to all the eminent schoolmasters in England, the absurd tyranny of poisoning the hour of permitted pleasure, by keeping future misery before the children's eyes, and tempting them by bribery or falsehood to evade it. 'Bob Sumner,' said he, 'however, I have at length prevailed upon: I know not indeed whether his tenderness was persuaded, or his reason convinced, but the effect will always be the same. Poor Dr. Sumner died, however, before the next vacation.'

"Dr. Johnson was of opinion, too, that young people should have *positive* not *general* rules given for their direction. 'My mother,' said he, 'was always telling me that I did not *behave* myself properly; that I should endeavour to learn *behaviour*, and such cant: but when I replied, that she ought to tell me what to do, and what to avoid, her admonitions were commonly, for that time at least, at an end.'

"This, I fear, was however at best a momentary refuge, found out by perverseness[3]. No man knew better than Johnson in how many nameless and numberless actions *behaviour* consists: actions which can scarcely be reduced to rule, and which come under no description. Of these he retained so many very strange ones, that I suppose no one who saw his odd manner of gesticulating much blamed or wondered at the good lady's solicitude concerning her son's *behaviour*.

"Though he was attentive to the peace of children in general, no man had a stronger contempt than he for such parents as openly profess that they cannot govern their children. 'How,' says he, 'is an army governed? Such people, for the most part, multiply prohibitions till obedience becomes impossible, and authority appears absurd; and never suspect that they tease their family, their friends, and themselves, only because conversation runs low, and something must be said.'

"Dr. Johnson's knowledge and esteem of what we call low or coarse life was indeed prodigious; and he did not like that the upper ranks should be dignified with the name of *the world*. Sir Joshua Reynolds said one day, that nobody *wore* laced coats now; and that once every body wore them. 'See now,' says Johnson, 'how absurd that is; as if the bulk of mankind consisted of fine gentlemen that came to him to sit for their pictures. If every man who wears a laced coat (that he can pay for) was extirpated, who would miss them?' With all this haughty contempt of gentility, no praise was more welcome to Dr. Johnson than that which said he had the notions or manners of a gentleman: which character I have heard him define with accuracy and describe with elegance.

"I was saying to a friend one day, that I did not like goose; one smells it so while

observation, or, what is more important, to the period at which the observation, which Johnson only quoted, was *originally made*.—Ed.]

[1] [This is not consistent with his opinion before recorded (*ante*, p. 21), of this lady's work for the instruction of youth.—Ed.]

[2] [Master of Harrow.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 205.—Ed.]

it is roasting, said I. 'But you, madam,' replies the Doctor, 'have been at all times a fortunate woman, having always had your hunger so forestalled by indulgence, that you never experienced the delight of smelling your dinner beforehand.' Which pleasure, answered I, pertly, is to be enjoyed in perfection by such as have the happiness to pass through Porridge-Island[1] of a morning. 'Come, come,' says he gravely, 'let's have no sneering at what is serious to so many: hundreds of your fellow-creatures, dear lady, turn another way, that they may not be tempted by the luxuries of Porridge-Island to wish for gratifications they are not able to obtain: you are certainly not better than all of *them;* give God thanks that you are happier.'

"I received on another occasion as just a rebuke from Dr. Johnson, for an offence of the same nature, and hope I took care never to provoke a third; for after a very long summer particularly hot and dry, I was wishing naturally, but thoughtlessly, for some rain to lay the dust as we drove along the Surrey roads. 'I cannot bear,' replied he, with much asperity and an altered look, 'when I know how many poor families will perish next winter for want of that bread which the present drought will deny them, to hear ladies sighing for rain, only that their complexions may not suffer from the heat, or their clothes be incommoded by the dust:—for shame! leave off such foppish lamentations, and study to relieve those whose distresses are real.'

"But it was never against people of coarse life that his contempt was expressed, while *poverty of sentiment* in men who considered themselves to be company for *the parlour*, as he called it, was what he would not bear.

"Even dress itself, when it resembled that of the vulgar, offended him exceedingly; and when he had condemned me many times for not adorning my children with more show than I thought useful or elegant, I presented a little girl to him who came o'visiting one evening covered with shining ornaments, to see if he would approve of the appearance she made. When they were gone home, 'Well, sir,' said I, 'how did you like miss? I hope she was *fine* enough?' 'It was the finery of a beggar,' said he, 'and you knew it was; she looked like a native of Cow-lane dressed up to be carried to Bartholomew fair.' His reprimand to another lady for crossing her little child's handkerchief before, and by that operation dragging down its head oddly and unintentionally, was on the same principle. 'It is the beggar's fear of cold,' said he, 'that prevails over such parents, and so they pull the poor thing's head down, and give it the look of a baby that plays about Westminster-bridge, while the mother sits shivering in a niche.'

"My compliances [in his criticisms on dress], however, were of little worth; what really surprised me was the victory he gained over a lady little accustomed to contradiction, who had dressed herself for church at Streatham one Sunday morning, in a manner he did not approve, and to whom he said such sharp and pungent things concerning her hat, her gown, &c. that she hastened to change them, and returning quite another figure received his applause, and thanked him for his reproofs, much to the amazement of her husband, who could scarcely believe his own ears.

"Another lady, whose accomplishments he never denied, came to our house one day covered with diamonds, feathers, &c. and he did not seem inclined to chat with her as usual. I asked him why, when the company was gone. 'Why, her head looked so like that of a woman who shows puppets,' said he, 'and her voice so confirmed the fancy, that I could not bear her to-day; when she wears a large cap, I can talk to her.'

"When the ladies wore lace trimmings to their clothes, he expressed his contempt of the reigning fashion in these terms: 'A Brussels trimming is like bread-sauce,' said he, 'it takes away the glow of colour from the gown, and gives you nothing instead of it; but sauce was invented to heighten the flavour of our food, and trimming is an ornament to the manteau, or it is nothing. Learn,' said he, 'that there is propriety or impropriety in every thing how slight soever, and get at the general principles of dress and of behaviour; if you then transgress them, you will at least know that they are not observed.'

"It was indeed astonishing how he *could* remark such minuteness with a sight so miserably imperfect; but no accidental position of a riband escaped him, so nice was his observation, and so rigorous his demands of propriety.

"When he turned his back on Lord

[1] Porridge-Island is a mean street in London, filled with cook-shops for the convenience of the poorer inhabitants; the real name of it I know not, but suspect that which it is generally known by, to have been originally a term of derision.—Piozzi. ["It is *not* a *street*, but a paved alley near the church of St. Martin's in the Fields."—*Malone MS.* These are the kind of errors on which Mr. Malone founds his violent censures of Mrs. Piozzi's *inaccuracy*, which he often calls *falsehood;* but the lady may surely be forgiven if she, in her inexperience, calls that a "*mean street*" which the more accurate Malone, probably by personal inspection, found to be a paved alley.—Ed.]

Bolingbroke[1] in the rooms at Brighthelmstone, he made this excuse: 'I am not obliged, sir,' said he to Mr. Thrale, who stood by fretting, 'to find reasons for respecting the rank of him who will not condescend to declare it by his dress or some other visible mark: what are stars and other signs of superiority made for?'

"All these exactnesses in a man who was nothing less than exact himself, made him extremely impracticable as an inmate, though most instructive as a companion, and useful as a friend. Mr. Thrale, too, could sometimes overrule his rigidity, by saying coldly, 'There, there, now we have had enough for one lecture, Dr. Johnson; we will not be upon education any more till after dinner, if you please;' or some such speech: but when there was nobody to restrain his dislikes, it was extremely difficult to find any body with whom he could converse, without living always on the verge of a quarrel, or of something too like a quarrel to be pleasing. I came into the room, for example, one evening, where he and a gentleman, [Mr. Seward], whose abilities we all respected exceedingly, were sitting; a lady[2] who walked in two minutes before me had blown them both into a flame, by whispering something to Mr. [Seward], which he endeavoured to explain away, so as not to affront the Doctor, whose suspicions were all alive. 'And have a care, sir,' said he just as I came in; 'the old lion will not bear to be tickled.' The other was pale with rage, the lady wept at the confusion she had caused, and I could only say with Lady Macbeth,

> 'You 've displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting
> With most admired disorder.'

"Two gentlemen, I perfectly well remember, dining with us at Streatham in the summer of 1782, when Elliot's brave defence of Gibraltar was a subject of common discourse, one of these men naturally enough began some talk about red-hot balls thrown with surprising dexterity and effect; which Dr. Johnson having listened some time to, 'I would advise you, sir,' said he, with a cold sneer, 'never to relate this story again; you really can scarce imagine how *very poor* a figure you make in the telling of it.' Our guest being bred a quaker, and, I believe, a man of an extremely gentle disposition, needed no more reproofs for the same folly; so if he ever did speak again, it was in a low voice to the friend who came with him. The check was given before dinner, and after coffee I left the room. When in the evening, however, our companions had returned to London, and Dr. Johnson and myself were left alone, with only our usual family about us, 'I did not quarrel with those quaker fellows,' said he, very seriously. 'You did perfectly right,' replied I; 'for they gave you no cause of offence.' 'No offence!' returned he, with an altered voice; 'and is it nothing then to sit whispering together when *I* am present, without ever directing their discourse towards me, or offering me a share in the conversation?' 'That was because you frighted him who spoke first about those hot balls.' 'Why, madam, if a creature is neither capable of giving dignity to falsehood, nor willing to remain contented with the truth, he deserves no better treatment[3].'

"Dr. Johnson's fixed incredulity[4] of every thing he heard, and his little care to conceal that incredulity, was teasing enough, to be sure; and I saw Mr. Sharp[5] was pained exceedingly, when relating the history of a hurricane that happened about that time in the West Indies, where, for

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 316. As Lord Bolingbroke did not happen to be a knight of any of the orders, it is not easy to guess how he could have satisfied Dr. Johnson's wishes.—Ed.]

[2] [The lady's name was Streatfield, as Mr. Seward told me. She was very handsome and a good scholar; for she understood Greek. She was piqued at Mr. Seward's paying more attention to Dr. Johnson than to her; and on coming in, whispered, "how his *bark* sat on his stomach;" alluding to the roughness which she supposed was in Dr. Johnson's conversation.—*Malone MS.*]

[3] [Mr. Malone, in his MS. notes, is very indignant that Mrs. Piozzi has omitted to state what the story was which produced this observation, and because she has not done so, questions the veracity of the whole anecdote; but this is very unjust. Mrs. Piozzi's object was to exhibit *Johnson's* manners, and not to record the minute details of the quaker's story.—Ed.]

[4] [Mr. Malone, in his MS. notes, observes on this passage, "*Here is another* GROSS MISREPRESENTATION. *He had no* fixed incredulity *concerning every thing he heard; but he had observed the great laxity with which almost every story is told, and therefore always examined it accurately, and frequently found some gross exaggeration. The writer herself had not the smallest regard for* truth, *as Johnson told Mr. Boswell* (*see his Life of Johnson*), *and hence this scrutinising habit of her guest was to her a very sore subject.*" On this the Editor must take leave to say, that Mr. Malone's observation defeats itself; because if Dr. Johnson's incredulity was a *sore subject* with Mrs. Piozzi, she cannot be blamed for recording it. Mr. Malone might have questioned her *judgment*, in supposing that Johnson was equally incredulous as to other persons, but not her *sincerity*, in describing him as she found him; and if he found *almost every story told with great laxity*, is it surprising that he should have an habitual incredulity?—Ed.]

[5] [See *ante*, p. 69.—Ed.]

aught I know, he had himself lost some friends too, he observed Dr. Johnson believed not a syllable of the account. 'For 't is *so* easy,' says he, 'for a man to fill his mouth with wonder, and run about telling the lie before it can be detected, that I have no heart to believe hurricanes easily raised by the first inventor, and blown forwards by thousands more.' I asked him once if he believed the story of the destruction of Lisbon by an earthquake, when it first happened. 'Oh! not for six months,' said he, 'at least. I *did* think that story too dreadful to be credited, and can hardly yet persuade myself that it was true to the full extent we all of us have heard.'

"Though thus uncommonly ready both to give and take offence, Dr. Johnson had many rigid maxims concerning the necessity of continued softness and compliance of disposition: and when I once mentioned Shenstone's idea, that some little quarrel among lovers, relations, and friends, was useful, and contributed to their general happiness upon the whole, by making the soul feel her elastic force, and return to the beloved object with renewed delight: 'Why, what a prenicious maxim is this now,' cried Dr. Johnson: '*all* quarrels ought to be avoided studiously, particularly conjugal ones, as no one can possibly tell where they may end; besides that lasting dislike is often the consequence of occasional disgust, and that the cup of life is surely bitter enough, without squeezing in the hateful rind of resentment.'

"A very ignorant young fellow, who had plagued us all for nine or ten months, died at last consumptive: 'I think,' said Dr. Johnson, when he heard the news, 'I am afraid I should have been more concerned for the death of the *dog;* but——' hesitating awhile, 'I am not wrong now in all this, for the dog acted up to his character on every occasion that we know; but that dunce of a fellow helped forward the general disgrace of humanity.' 'Why, dear sir,' said I, 'how odd you are! you have often said the lad was not capable of receiving farther instruction.' 'He was,' replied the Doctor, 'like a corked bottle, with a drop of dirty water in it, to be sure; one might pump upon it forever without the smallest effect; but when every method to open and clean it had been tried [in vain], you would not have me grieve that the bottle was broke at last.'

"This was the same youth who told us he had been reading Lucius Florus; *Florus Delphini* was the phrase: and, 'my mother,' said he, 'thought it had something to do with Delphos; but of that I know nothing.' 'Who founded Rome, then?' inquired Mr. Thrale. The lad replied, Romulus.' 'And who succeeded Romulus?' said I. A long pause, and apparently distressful hesitation, followed the difficult question. 'Why will you ask him in terms that he does not comprehend?' said Dr. Johnson, enraged. 'You might as well bid him tell you who phlebotomized Romulus. This fellow's dulness is elastic.' continued he, 'and all we do is but like kicking at a woolsack.' The pains he took however to obtain the young man more patient instructors were many, and oftentimes repeated. He was put under the care of a clergyman in a distant province; and Dr. Johnson used both to write and talk to his friend concerning his education.

"A young fellow, less confident of his own abilities, lamenting one day that he had lost all his Greek—'I believe it happened at the same time, sir,' said Johnson, 'that I lost all my large estate in Yorkshire.'

"Of a Jamaica gentleman, then lately dead, he said—'He will not, whither he is now gone, find much difference, I believe either in the climate or the company.'

"Returning home one day from dining at the chaplains' table [1], he told me, that Dr. Goldsmith had given a very comical and unnecessarily exact recital there of his own feelings when his play was hissed; telling the company how he went indeed to the Literary Club at night, and chatted gaily among his friends, as if nothing had happened amiss; that to impress them still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sung his favourite song about '*an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon;*' 'but all this while I was suffering horrid tortures,' said he, 'and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that; and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imaged to themselves the anguish of my heart: but when all were gone except Johnson here, I burst out a-crying, and even *swore* that I would never write again.' 'All which, doctor,' said Dr. Johnson, amazed at his odd frankness, 'I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said any thing about it for the world. Now see,' repeated he when he told the story, 'what a figure a man makes who thus unaccountably chooses to be the frigid narrator of his own disgrace. *Il volto sciolto, ed i pensieri stretti,* was a proverb made on purpose for such mortals, to keep people, if possible, from being thus the heralds of their own shame: for what compassion can they gain by such silly narratives? No man should be expected to sympathize with the sorrows of vanity. If then you are mortified by any ill usage, whether real or supposed, keep at least the account of such mortifications to yourself, and forbear

[1] [At St. James's palace.—Ed.]

to proclaim how meanly you are thought on by others, unless you desire to be meanly thought of by all.'

"Poor Goldsmith was to him indeed like the earthen pot to the iron one in Fontaine's fables; it had been better for *him*, perhaps, that they had changed companions oftener; yet no experience of his antagonist's strength hindered him from continuing the contest. He used to remind me always of that verse in Berni,

> 'Il pover uomo che non sen' era accorto,
> Andava combattendo—ed era morto.'

"Dr. Johnson made him a comical answer one day, when seeming to repine at the success of Beattie's Essay on Truth. 'Here's such a stir,' said he, 'about a fellow that has written one book, and I have written many.' 'Ah, Doctor,' said his friend, 'there go two-and-forty sixpences, you know, to one guinea.'

"Garrick said to Dr. Johnson one day, 'Why did not you make me a tory, when we lived so much together? you love to make people tories.' 'Why,' said Johnson, pulling a heap of half-pence from his pocket, 'did not the king make these—guineas?'

"But however roughly he might be suddenly provoked to treat a harmless exertion of vanity, he did not wish to inflict the pain he gave, and was sometimes very sorry when he perceived the people to smart more than they deserved. 'How harshly you treated that man to-day,' said I once, 'who harangued us so about gardening!' 'I am sorry,' said he, 'if I vexed the creature, for there certainly is no harm in a fellow's rattling a *rattle-box;* only do 'nt let him think that he *thunders.*'

"We were speaking of a gentleman who loved his friend—'Make him prime minister,' said Johnson, 'and see how long his friend will be remembered.' But he had a rougher answer for me, when I commended a sermon preached by an intimate acquaintance of our own at the trading end of the town. 'What was the subject, madam?' said Dr. Johnson. 'Friendship, sir,' replied I. 'Why now, is it not strange that a wise man, like our dear little Evans, should take it in his head to preach on such a subject, in a place where no one can be thinking of it?' 'Why, what are they thinking upon, sir?' said I. 'Why, the men are thinking on their money, I suppose, and the women are thinking of their mops.'

"I have mentioned before, that old age had very little of Dr. Johnson's reverence: A man commonly grew wickeder as he grew older,' he said, 'at least he but changed the vices of youth, headstrong passion and wild temerity, for treacherous caution and desire to circumvent. I am always,' said he, 'on the young people's side, when there is a dispute between them and the old ones; for you have at least a chance for virtue till age has withered its very root.' While we were talking, my mother's spaniel, whom he never loved, stole our toast and butter: 'Fie, Belle!' said I, 'you used to be upon honour.' 'Yes, madam,' replied Johnson, '*but Belle grows old.*' His reason for hating the dog was, 'because she was a professed favourite,' he said, 'and because her lady ordered her from time to time to be washed and combed: a foolish trick,' said he, 'and an assumption of superiority that every one's nature revolts at; so because one must not wish ill to the lady in such cases,' continued he, 'one curses the cur.' The truth is, Belle was not well-behaved, and being a large spaniel, was troublesome enough at dinner with frequent solicitations to be fed. 'This animal,' said Dr. Johnson, one day, 'would have been of extraordinary merit and value in the state of Lycurgus; for she condemns one to the exertion of perpetual vigilance.'

"Though apt enough to take sudden likings or aversions to people he occasionally met, he would never hastily pronounce upon their character; and when, seeing him justly delighted with Dr. Solander's[1] conversation, I observed once that he was a man of great parts, who talked from a full mind—'It may be so,' said Dr. Johnson, 'but you cannot know it yet, nor I neither: the pump works well, to be sure; but how, I wonder, are we to decide in so very short an acquaintance, whether it is supplied by a *spring* or a *reservoir?*'

"He always made a great difference in his esteem between talents and erudition; and when he saw a person eminent for literature, wholly unconversable, it fretted him. 'Teaching such tonies,' said he to me one day, 'is like setting a lady's diamonds in lead, which only obscures the lustre of the stone, and makes the possessor ashamed on 't.'

"Among the numberless people, however, whom I heard him grossly and flatly contradict, I never yet saw any one who did not take it patiently excepting Dr. Burney, from whose habitual softness of manners I little expected such an exertion of spirit: the event was as little to be expected. Dr. Johnson asked his pardon generously and genteelly, and when he left the room rose up to shake hands with him, that they might part in peace.

"When Dr. Johnson had a mind to compliment any one, he did it with more dignity to himself, and better effect upon the company, than any man. I can recollect but few instances indeed, though perhaps that may be more my fault than his.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. 438.—Ed.]

When Sir Joshua Reynolds left the room one day, he said, 'There goes a man not to be spoiled by prosperity.'

"He was not at all offended, when, comparing all our acquaintance to some animal or other, we pitched upon the elephant for his resemblance, adding, that the proboscis of that creature was like his mind most exactly—strong to buffet even the tiger, and pliable to pick up even the pin. The truth is, Dr. Johnson was often good-humouredly willing to join in childish amusements, and hated to be left out of any innocent merriment that was going forward. He liked a frolic or a jest well enough; though he had strange serious rules about it too: and very angry was he if any body offered to be merry when he was disposed to be grave. 'You have an ill-founded notion,' said he, 'that it is clever to turn matters off with a joke, as the phrase is; whereas nothing produces enmity so certain, as one person's showing a disposition to be merry when another is inclined to be either serious or displeased.'

"I likewise remember that he pronounced one day at my house a most lofty panegyric upon Jones[1], the orientalist, who seemed little pleased with the praise, for what cause I know not.

"An Irish trader at our house one day heard Dr. Johnson launch out into very great and greatly-deserved praises of Mr. Edmund Burke: delighted to find his countryman stood so high in the opinion of a man he had been told so much of, 'Sir,' said he, 'give *me* leave to tell something of Mr. Burke now.' We were all silent, and the honest Hibernian began to relate how Mr. Burke went to see the collieries in a distant province: 'and he would go down into the bowels of the earth (in a bag), and he would examine every thing; he went in a bag, sir, and ventured his health and his life for knowledge; but he took care of his clothes, that they should not be spoiled, for he went down in a bag.' 'Well, sir,' said Dr. Johnson, good-humouredly, 'if our friend Mund should die in any of these hazardous exploits, you and I would write his life and panegyric together; and your chapter of it should be entitled thus—*Burke in a bag*.'

"Mr. Thrale was one time extolling the character of a statesman, and expatiating on the skill required to direct the different currents, reconcile the jarring interests, &c. 'Thus,' replied Johnson, 'a mill is a complicated piece of mechanism enough, but the water is no part of the workmanship.'

"On another occasion, when some one lamented the weakness of the then minister, and complained that he was dull and tardy, and knew little of affairs—'You may as well complain, sir,' said Johnson, 'that the accounts of time are kept by the clock; for he certainly does stand still upon the stair-head—and we all know that he is no great chronologer.'

"He told me that the character of *Sober* in the 'Idler' was by himself intended as his own portrait; and that he had his own outset into life in his eye when he wrote the eastern story of Gelaleddin.

"Of a much-admired poem, when extolled as beautiful, he replied, 'That it had indeed the beauty of a bubble: the colours are gay,' said he, 'but the substance slight.'

"When Dr. Johnson felt, or fancied he felt, his fancy disordered, his constant recurrence was to the study of arithmetic: and one day that he was totally confined to his chamber, and I inquired what he had been doing to divert himself, he showed me a calculation which I could scarce be made to understand, so vast was the plan of it, and so very intricate were the figures; no other indeed than that the national debt, computing it at one hundred and eighty millions sterling, would, if converted into silver, serve to make a meridian of that metal, I forget how broad, for the globe of the whole earth, the real *globe*.

"I told him of a friend who suffered grievously with the gout. 'He will live a vast many years for all that,' replied he, 'and then what signifies how much he suffers? but he will die at last, poor fellow, there's the misery; gout seldom takes the fort by a *coup-de-main*, but turning the siege into a *blockade*, obliges it to surrender at discretion.'

"A lady he thought well of was disordered in her health. 'What help has she called in?' inquired Johnson. 'Dr. James, sir,' was the reply. 'What is her disease?' 'Oh, nothing positive; rather a gradual and gentle decline.' 'She will die then, pretty dear!' answered he: 'when death's pale horse runs away with a person on full speed, an active physician may possibly give them a turn; but if he carries them on an even slow pace, down hill too, no care nor skill can save them!'

"Sir William Browne, the physician, who lived to a very extraordinary age[2], and was in other respects an odd mortal, with more genius than understanding, and more self-sufficiency than wit, was the only person who ventured to oppose Dr. John-

[1] [Sir William Jones.—ED.]

[2] [He died in March, 1774, at the age of eighty-two. It is nowhere stated, that the Editor knows of, that this epigram was made extemporaneously on a provocation from Dr. Johnson. See an account of Sir William Browne, and a more accurate version of the two epigrams, in the Biog. Dict.—ED.]

sen, when he had a mind to shine by exalting his favourite university, and to express his contempt of the whiggish notions which prevail at Cambridge. *He* did it once, however, with surprising felicity: his antagonist having repeated with an air of triumph the famous epigram written by Dr. Trapp,

'Our royal master saw, with heedful eyes,
The wants of his two universities:
Troops he to Oxford sent, as knowing why
That learned body wanted loyalty:
But books to Cambridge gave, as, well discerning,
That that right loyal body wanted learning.'

Which, says Sir William, might well be answered thus:

'The king to Oxford sent his troop of horse,
For tories own no argument but force;
With equal care to Cambridge books he sent,
For whigs allow no force but argument.'

"Dr. Johnson did him the justice to say, it was one of the happiest extemporaneous productions he ever met with; though he once comically confessed, that he hated to repeat the wit of a whig urged in support of whiggism.

"When Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted his portrait looking into the slit of his pen, and holding it almost close to his eye, as was his general custom, he felt displeased, and told me, 'he would not be known by posterity for his *defects* only, let Sir Joshua do his worst.' I said in reply, that Reynolds had no such difficulties about himself, and that he might observe the picture which hung up in the room where we were talking represented Sir Joshua holding his ear in his hand to catch the sound. 'He may paint himself as deaf if he chooses,' replied Johnson; 'but I will not be *blinking Sam.*'

"As we had been saying one day that no subject failed of receiving dignity from the manner in which Dr. Johnson treated it, a lady at our house said, she would make him talk about *love*, and took her measures accordingly, deriding the novels of the day because they treated about love. 'It is not,' replied our philosopher, 'because they treat, as you call it, about *love*, but because they treat of *nothing*, that they are despicable: we must not ridicule a passion which he who never felt never was happy, and he who laughs at never deserves to feel—a passion which has caused the change of empires, and the loss of worlds—a passion which has inspired heroism and subdued avarice.' He thought he had already said too much. 'A passion, in short,' added he, with an altered tone, 'that consumes me away for my pretty Fanny [1] here, and she is very cruel.'

"As Johnson was the firmest of believers without being credulous, so he was the most charitable of mortals without being what we call an active friend [2]. Admirable at giving counsel, no man saw his way so clearly; but he would not stir a finger for the assistance of those to whom he was willing enough to give advice: besides that, he had principles of laziness, and could be indolent by rule. To hinder your death, or procure you a dinner—I mean, if really in want of one—his earnestness, his exertions, could not be prevented, though health, and purse, and ease were all destroyed by their violence. If you wanted a slight favour, you must apply to people of other dispositions; for not a step would Johnson move to obtain a man a vote in a society, or repay a compliment, which might be useful or pleasing, to write a letter of request, or to obtain a hundred pounds a year more for a friend, who, perhaps, had already two or three. No force could urge him to diligence, no importunity could conquer his resolution of standing still. 'What good are we doing with all this ado?' would he say: 'dearest lady, let's hear no more of it!' I have, however, more than once in my life forced him on such services, but with extreme difficulty. We parted at his door one evening when I had teased him for many weeks to write a recommendatory letter of a little boy to his schoolmaster; and after he had faithfully promised to do this prodigious feat before we met again—'Do not forget dear Dick, sir,' said I, as he went out of the coach. He turned back, stood still two minutes on the carriage-step—'When I have written my letter for Dick, I may hang myself, may n't I?' and turned away in a very ill humour indeed.

"The strangest applications in the world were certainly made from time to time towards Dr. Johnson, who by that means had an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, and could if he pleased, tell the most astonishing stories of human folly and human weakness that ever were confided to any man not a confessor by profession.

"One day, when he was in a humour to record some of them, he told us the following tale: 'A person,' said he, 'had for these last five weeks often called at my door, but would not leave his name, or other message, but that he wished to speak with me At last we met, and he told me that he was oppressed by scruples of conscience. I blamed him gently for not applying, as the rules of our church direct, to his parish priest, or other discreet clergyman; when, after some compliments on his part, he told me, that he was clerk to a very eminent trader, at whose ware-houses much business consisted in packing goods in order to go

[1] [Miss Burney, the authour of Evelina, &c. now Madame D'Arblay.—Ed.]

[2] [See *post*, *sub* June, 1784.—Ed.]

abroad; that he was often tempted to take paper and packthread enough for his own use, and that he had indeed done so so often, that he could recollect no time when he ever had bought any for himself. 'But probably,' said I, 'your master was wholly indifferent with regard to such trivial emoluments; you had better ask for it at once, and so take your trifles with consent.' 'Oh, sir!' replied the visitor, 'my master bid me have as much as I pleased, and was half angry when I talked to him about it.' 'Then pray, sir,' said I, 'tease me no more about such airy nothings;' and was going on to be very angry, when I recollected that the fellow might be mad perhaps; so I asked him when he left the counting-house of an evening? 'At seven o'clock, sir.' 'And when do you go to bed, sir?' 'At twelve o'clock.' 'Then,' replied I, 'I have at least learned thus much by my new acquaintance—that five hours of the four-and-twenty unemployed are enough for a man to go mad in: so I would advise you, sir, to study algebra, if you are not an adept already in it: your head would get less *muddy*, and you will leave off tormenting your neighbours about paper and packthread, while we all live together in a world that is bursting with sin and sorrow.' It is perhaps needless to add that this visitor came no more. Dr. Johnson had a real abhorrence of any one who ever treated a little thing like a great one, and very often quoted this scrupulous gentleman with his packthread.

"A man for whom he often begged, made, as he told us, a wild use of his beneficence, spending in punch the solitary guinea which had been brought him one morning: when resolving to add another claimant to a share of the bowl, besides a woman who always lived with him, and a footman who used to carry out petitions for charity, he borrowed a chairman's watch, and pawning it for half a crown, paid a clergyman to marry him to a fellow-lodger in the wretched house they all inhabited, and got so drunk over the guinea bowl of punch the evening of his wedding-day, that having many years lost the use of one leg, he now contrived to fall from the top of the stairs to the bottom, and break his arm, in which condition his companions left him to call Dr. Johnson, who relating the series of his tragicomical distresses, obtained from the Literary Club a seasonable relief.

"Dr. Johnson did not, however, much delight in that kind of conversation which consists in telling stories. 'Every body,' said he, 'tells stories of me, and I tell stories of nobody. I do not recollect,' added he, 'that I have ever told *you*, that have been always favourites, above three stories; but I hope I do not play the old fool, and force people to hear uninteresting narratives, only because I once was diverted with them myself.'

"Though at an immeasurable distance from content in the contemplation of his own uncouth form and figure, he did not like another man much the less for being a coxcomb. I mentioned two friends[1] who were particularly fond of looking at themselves in a glass—'They do not surprise me at all by so doing,' said Johnson: 'they see, reflected in that glass, men who have risen from almost the lowest situations in life; one to enormous riches, the other to every thing this world can give—rank, fame, and fortune. They see likewise men who have merited their advancement by the exertion and improvement of those talents which God had given them; and I see not why they should avoid the mirror.'"

This year the Reverend Dr. Franklin having published a translation of "Lucian," inscribed to him the *Demonax* thus:

"To Dr. Samuel Johnson, the Demonax of the present age, this piece is inscribed by a sincere admirer of his respectable talents, THE TRANSLATOR."

Though upon a particular comparison of Demonax and Johnson, there does not seem to be a great deal of similarity between them[2], this dedication is a just compliment from the general character given by Lucian of the ancient sage, "ἄριστον ὧν οἶδα ἐγὼ φιλοσόφων γενόμενον, the best philosopher whom I have ever seen or known."

In 1781, Johnson at last completed his "Lives of the Poets," of which he gives this account: "Some time in March I finished the 'Lives of the Poets,' which I wrote in my usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, and working with vigour and haste." Pr. and Med. p. 190.

["This facility of writing, and this dilatoriness to write, Dr. John- Piozzi, p. 36.

[1] ["These two friends were John Cator, a timber-merchant in the Borough, and Wedderburn, Lord Loughborough."—*Piozzi MS.*—ED.]

[2] [There were, no doubt, some points in which Johnson did not resemble Demonax, who was high-born and rich, very mild in his manners, gentle in argument and even in his reprimands, and lived to a great age, in uninterrupted health; but in many particulars Lucian's character seems very curiously applicable to Johnson; and indeed his tract resembles (in little) Boswell's own work, being a collection of observations on several topics, moral, critical, and religious, made by a philosopher of strong sense, ready wit, and fearless veracity; and the character which Lucian ascribes to the conversation of Demonax appears to the editor very like (making due allowance for the difference of ancient and modern habits and topics) the style of that of Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

son," says Mrs. Piozzi, "always retained, from the days that he lay a-bed and dictated his first publication to Mr. Hector, who acted as his amanuensis, to the moment he made me copy out those variations in Pope's Homer which are printed in the *Lives of the Poets*[1]. 'And now,' said he, when I had finished it for him, 'I fear not Mr. Nichols[2] [the printer] a pin.'"]

Pr. and Med. p. 174. In a memorandum previous to this, he says of them: "Written, I hope, in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety."

This is the work which, of all Dr. Johnson's writings, will perhaps be read most generally, and with most pleasure. Philology and biography were his favourite pursuits, and those who lived most in intimacy with him, heard him upon all occasions, when there was a proper opportunity, take delight in expatiating upon the various merits of the English poets: upon the niceties of their characters, and the events of their progress through the world which they contributed to illuminate. His mind was so full of that kind of information, and it was so well arranged in his memory, that in performing what he had undertaken in this way, he had little more to do than to put his thoughts upon paper; exhibiting first each poet's life, and then subjoining a critical examination of his genius and works. But when he began to write, the subject swelled in such a manner, that instead of prefaces to each poet, of no more than a few pages, as he had originally intended[3], he produced an ample, rich, and most entertaining view of them in every respect. In this he resembled Quintilian, who tells us, that in the composition of his "Institutions of Oratory," "*Latiùs se tamen aperiente materiâ, plus quàm imponebatur oneris sponte suscepi.*" The booksellers, justly sensible of the great additional value of the copyright, presented him with another hundred pounds, over and above two hundred, for which his agreement was to furnish such prefaces as he thought fit.

["The bargain," as Mr. Nichols states, "was for two hundred guineas, and the booksellers spontaneously added a *third* hundred; on this occasion Dr. Johnson observed to Mr. Nichols, 'Sir, I always said the booksellers were a generous set of men. Nor, in the present instance, have I reason to complain. The fact is, not that they have paid me too little, but that I have written too much.' The 'Lives' were soon published in a separate edition; when, for a very few corrections, the Doctor was presented with another hundred guineas."] Gent. Mag. v. lxxxii. part ii. p. 54.

This was, however, but a small recompense for such a collection of biography, and such principles and illustrations of criticism, as, if digested and arranged in one system, by some modern Aristotle or Longinus, might form a code upon that subject, such as no other nation can show. As he was so good as to make me a present of the greatest part of the original, and indeed only manuscript of this admirable work, I have an opportunity of observing with wonder the correctness with which he rapidly struck off such glowing composition. He may be assimilated to the lady in Waller, who could impress with "love at first sight:"

> "Some other nymphs with colours faint,
> And pencil slow, may Cupid paint,
> And a weak heart in time destroy;
> She has a stamp, and prints the boy."

That he, however, had a good deal of trouble[4], and some anxiety in carrying on the work, we see from a series of letters to Mr. Nichols, the printer, whose variety of literary inquiry and obliging disposition rendered him useful to Johnson. Thus:

"In the Life of Waller, Mr. Nichols will find a reference to the Parliamentary History, from which a long quotation is to be inserted. If Mr. Nichols cannot easily find the book, Mr. Johnson will send it from Streatham.

"Clarendon is here returned.

"By some accident I laid *your* note upon Duke up so safely, that I cannot find it. Your informations have been of great use to me. I must beg it again, with another list of our authours, for I have laid that with the other. I have sent Stepney's

[1] [The first *livraison* was published in 1779. This edition of the Poets was in sixty vols. 12mo. —Ed.]

[2] [This name is misprinted *Nicholson* in Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*.—Ed.]

[3] His design is thus announced in his advertisement: "The booksellers having determined to publish a body of English poetry, I was persuaded to promise them a preface to the works of each authour; an undertaking, as it was then presented to my mind, not very tedious or difficult. My purpose was only to have allotted to every poet an advertisement, like that which we find in the 'French Miscellanies,' containing a few dates, and a general character; but I have been led beyond my intention, I hope by the honest desire of giving useful pleasure."—Boswell.

[4] [The reader has, however, seen some instances, and many others might be produced, in which Dr. Johnson, when he published a new edition, utterly disregarded the corrections of errors of which he was apprised. The truth is, he began the work as a thing that might be done in a few weeks, and was surprised and fatigued at the length to which he found it expand: and it is not wonderful that at so advanced an age he was not very anxious to purchase minute accuracy by the labour of revision.—Ed.]

Epitaph Let me have the revises as soon can be. Dec. 1778.

"I have sent Philips, with his Epitaphs, to be inserted. The fragment of a preface is hardly worth the impression, but that we may seem to do something. It may be added to the Life of Philips. The Latin page is to be added to the Life of Smith. I shall be at home to revise the two sheets of Milton. March 1, 1779.

"Please to get me the last edition of Hughes's Letters; and try to get Dennis upon Blackmore and upon Cato, and any thing of the same writer against Pope. Our materials are defective.

"As Waller professed to have imitated Fairfax, do you think a few pages of Fairfax would enrich our edition? Few readers have seen it, and it may please them. But it is not necessary.

"An Account of the Lives and Works of some of the most eminent English Poets, by, &c 'The English Poets, biographically and critically considered, by Sam. Johnson.' Let Mr. Nichols take his choice, or make another to his mind. May, 1781.

"You somehow forgot the advertisement for the new edition. It was not inclosed. Of Gay's Letters I see not that any use can be made, for they give no information of any thing. That he was a member of a philosophical society is something; but surely he could be but a corresponding member. However, not having his Life here, I know not how to put it in, and it is of little importance[1]."

Mr. Steevens appears, from the papers in my possession, to have supplied him with some anecdotes and quotations; and I observe the fair hand[2] of Mrs. Thrale as one of his copyists of select passages. But he was principally indebted to my steady friend, Mr. Isaac Reed, of Staple-inn, whose extensive and accurate knowledge of English literary history I do not express with exaggeration, when I say it is wonderful; indeed his labours have proved it to the world; and all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance can bear testimony to the frankness of his communications in private society.

It is not my intention to dwell upon each of Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," or attempt an analysis of their merits, which, were I able to do it, would take up too much room in this work; yet I shall make a few observations upon some of them, and insert a few various readings.

The Life of Cowley he himself considered as the best of the whole, on account of the dissertation which it contains on the *Metaphysical Poets*. [And he also gave it the preference as containing a nicer investigation and discrimination of the characteristics of *wit*, than is elsewhere to be found.] Dryden, whose critical abilities were equal to his poetical, had mentioned them in his excellent Dedication of his Juvenal, but had barely mentioned them. Johnson has exhibited them at large, with such happy illustration from their writings, and in so luminous a manner, that indeed he may be allowed the full merit of novelty, and to have discovered to us, as it were, a new planet in the poetical hemisphere. Hawk. p. 538.

It is remarked by Johnson, in considering the works of a poet[3], that "amendments are seldom made without some token of a rent;" but I do not find that this is applicable to prose[4]. We shall see that though his amendments in this work are for the better, there is nothing of the *pannus assutus;* the texture is uniform; and indeed, what had been there at first, is very seldom unfit to have remained.

VARIOUS READINGS[5] IN THE LIFE OF COWLEY.

"All [future votaries of *that may hereafter pant for* solitude

"To conceive and execute the [agitation or perception] *pains and the pleasures* of other minds.

"The wide effulgence of [the blazing] *a summer* noon."

In the Life of Waller, Johnson gives a distinct and animated narrative of publick affairs in that variegated period, with strong yet nice touches of character; and having a fair opportunity to display his political principles, does it with an unqualified manly confidence, and satisfies his readers how nobly he might have executed a *Tory History* of his country.

So easy is his style in these Lives, that I do not recollect more than three uncommon or learned words: one, when giving an account of the approach of Waller's mortal disease, he says, "he found his legs grow

[1] See several more in "The Gentleman's Magazine," 1785. The editor of that miscellany, in which Johnson wrote for several years, seems justly to think that every fragment of so great a man is worthy of being preserved.—Boswell.

[2] [A *fair hand*, in more than one sense—her writing is an almost perfect specimen of calligraphy; and this power remained unimpaired to the last years of her long life.—Ed.]

[3] Life of Sheffield.—Boswell.

[4] See, however, p. 116 of this volume, where the same remark is made, and Johnson is there speaking of *prose*. In his Life of Dryden, his observations on the opera of "King Arthur." furnish a striking instance of the truth of this remark.—Malone.

[5] The original reading is enclosed in brackets, and the present one is printed in italicks.—Boswell.

tumid;" by using the expression his legs *swelled*, he would have avoided this; and there would have been no impropriety in its being followed by the interesting question to his physician, "What that *swelling* meant?" Another, when he mentions that Pope had *emitted* proposals; when *published* or *issued* would have been more readily understood; and a third, when he calls Orrery and Dr. Delaney writers both undoubtedly *veracious;* when *true*, *honest*, or *faithful*, might have been used. Yet, it must be owned, that none of these are *hard* or *too big* words; that custom would make them seem as easy as any others; and that a language is richer and capable of more beauty of expression, by having a greater variety of synonymes.

His dissertation upon the unfitness of poetry for the awful subjects of our holy religion, though I do not entirely agree with him, has all the merit of originality, with uncommon force and reasoning.

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF WALLER.

"Consented to [the insertion of their names] *their own nomination.*

"[After] *paying* a fine of ten thousand pounds.

"Congratulating Charles the Second on his [coronation] *recovered right.*

"He that has flattery ready for all whom the vicissitudes of the world happen to exalt, must be [confessed to degrade his powers] *scorned as a prostituted mind.*

"The characters by which Waller intended to distinguish his writings are [elegance] *sprightliness* and dignity.

"Blossoms to be valued only as they [fetch] *foretell* fruits.

"Images such as the superficies of nature [easily] *readily* supplies.

"[His] *Some* applications [are sometimes] *may be thought* too remote and unconsequential.

"His images are [sometimes confused] *not always distinct.*"

Against his Life of Milton, the hounds of whiggism have opened in full cry. But of Milton's great excellence as a poet, where shall we find such a blazon as by the hand of Johnson? I shall select only the following passage concerning "Paradise Lost:"

"Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked his reputation stealing its way in a kind of subterraneous current, through fear and silence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little disappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with steady consciousness, and waiting, without impatience, the vicissitudes of opinion, and the impartiality of a future generation."

Indeed even Dr. Towers, who may be considered as one of the warmest zealots of *The Revolution Society* itself, allows, that "Johnson has spoken in the highest terms of the abilities of that great poet, and has bestowed on his principal poetical compositions the most honourable encomiums[1]."

That a man, who venerated the church and monarchy as Johnson did, should speak with a just abhorrence of Milton as a politician, or rather as a daring foe to good polity, was surely to be expected; and to those who censure him, I would recommend his commentary on Milton's celebrated complaint of his situation, when by the lenity of Charles the Second, "a lenity of which," as Johnson well observes, "the world has had perhaps no other example, he, who had written in justification of the murder of his sovereign, was safe under an *Act of Oblivion.*" "No sooner is he safe than he finds himself in danger, *fallen on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with dangers compassed round.* This darkness, had his eyes been better employed, had undoubtedly deserved compassion; but to add the mention of danger was ungrateful and unjust. He was fallen, indeed, on *evil days;* the time was come in which regicides could no longer boast their wickedness. But of *evil tongues* for Milton to complain, required impudence at least equal to his other powers; Milton, whose warmest advocates must allow, that he never spared any asperity of reproach, or brutality of insolence."

I have, indeed, often wondered how Milton, "an acrimonious and surly republican[2]," "a man who in his domestick relations was so severe and arbitrary[3]," and

[1] See "An Essay on the Life, Character, and Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson," London, 1787 which is very well written, making a proper allowance for the democratical bigotry of its authour: whom I cannot however but admire for his liberality in speaking thus of my illustrious friend:—"He possessed extraordinary powers of understanding, which were much cultivated by study, and still more by meditation and reflection. His memory was remarkably retentive, his imagination uncommonly vigorous, and his judgment keen and penetrating. He had a strong sense of the importance of religion; his piety was sincere, and sometimes ardent; and his zeal for the interests of virtue was often manifested in his conversation and in his writings. The same energy which was displayed in his literary productions was exhibited also in his conversation, which was various, striking, and instructive; and perhaps no man ever equalled him for nervous and pointed repartees. His Dictionary, his Moral Essays, and his productions in polite literature, will convey useful instruction, and elegant entertainment, as long as the language in which they are written shall be understood."—BOSWELL.

[2] Johnson's Life of Milton.—BOSWELL.

[3] Ibid.—BOSWELL.

whose head was filled with the hardest and most dismal tenets of Calvinism, should have been such a poet; should not only have written with sublimity, but with beauty, and even gaiety; should have exquisitely painted the sweetest sensations of which our nature is capable; imaged the delicate raptures of connubial love; nay, seemed to be animated with all the spirit of revelry. It is a proof that in the human mind the departments of judgment and imagination, perception and temper, may sometimes be divided by strong partitions; and that the light and shade in the same character may be kept so distinct as never to be blended [1].

Murph. Essay, p. 66.

[Mr. Nichols, whose attachment to his illustrious friend was unwearied, showed him, in 1780, a book called *Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton*, in which the affair of Lauder was renewed with virulence, and a *poetical scale* in the Literary Magazine, 1758 (when Johnson had ceased to write in that collection), was urged as an additional proof of deliberate malice. He read the libellous passage with attention, and instantly wrote on the margin: "In the business of Lauder I was deceived, partly by thinking the man too frantic to be fraudulent. Of the *poetical scale*, quoted from the Magazine, I am not the authour. I fancy it was put in after I had quitted that work; for I not only did not write it, but I do not remember it."]

In the Life of Milton, Johnson took occasion to maintain his own and the general opinion of the excellence of rhyme over blank verse, in English poetry; and quotes this apposite illustration of it by "an ingenious critick," that *it seems to be verse only to the eye* [2]. The gentleman whom he thus characterises is (as he told Mr. Seward) Mr. Lock, of Norbury Park, in Surrey, whose knowledge and taste in the fine arts is universally celebrated; with whose elegance of manners the writer of the present work has felt himself much impressed, and to whose virtues a common friend, who has known him long, and is not much addicted to flattery, gives the highest testimony.

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF MILTON.

"I cannot find any meaning but this which [his most bigoted advocates] *even kindness and reverence* can give

"[Perhaps no] *scarcely any* man ever wrote so much, and praised so few.

"A certain [rescue] *preservative* from oblivion.

"Let me not be censured for this digression, as [contracted] *pedantick* or paradoxical.

"Socrates rather was of opinion, that what we had to learn was how to [obtain and communicate happiness] *do good and avoid evil.*

"Its elegance [who can exhibit?] *is less attainable.*"

I could, with pleasure, expatiate upon the masterly execution of the Life of Dryden, which we have seen [3] was one of Johnson's literary projects at an early period, and which it is remarkable, that after desisting from it, from a supposed scantiness of materials, he should, at an advanced age, have exhibited so amply.

Piozzi, p. 43.

[Though Johnson had the highest opinion of Pope [4] as a writer, his superiour reverence for Dryden notwithstanding still appeared in his talk as in his writings; and when some one mentioned the ridicule thrown on him in the "Rehearsal," as having hurt his general character as an authour, "On the contrary," says Dr. Johnson, "the greatness of Dryden's reputation is now the only principle of vitality which keeps the Duke of Buckingham's play from putrefaction."

It was not very easy however for people not quite intimate with Dr. Johnson, to get exactly his opinion of a writer's merit, as though he would sometimes divert himself by confounding those who thought themselves safe to say to-morrow what he had said yesterday; and even Garrick, who ought to have been better acquainted with his tricks, professed himself mortified, that one time when he was extolling Dryden in a rapture that perhaps disgusted his friend, Dr. Johnson suddenly challenged him to produce twenty lines in a series that would not disgrace the poet and his admirer Garrick produced a passage that he had once heard the Doctor commend, in which he *now* found, as Mrs. Piozzi remembered, sixteen faults, and made Garrick look silly at his own table.]

His defence of that great poet against the illiberal attacks upon him, as if his embracing the Roman Catholic communion had been a time-serving measure, is a piece of reasoning at once able and candid. Indeed, Dryden himself, in his "Hind and Panther," hath given such a picture of his mind, that they who know the anxiety for repose as to

[1] Mr. Malone thinks it is rather a proof that he felt nothing of those cheerful sensations which he has described: that on these topicks it is the *poet*, and not the *man*, that writes.—BOSWELL.

[2] One of the most natural instances of the effect of blank verse occurred to the late Earl of Hopeton. His lordship observed one of his shepherds poring in the fields upon Milton's "Paradise Lost;" and having asked him what book it was, the man answered, 'An't please your lordship, this is a vey odd sort of an authour: he would fain rhyme, but cannot get at it."—BOSWELL.

[3] See *ante*, p. 74.—BOSWELL.

[4] ["When a lady at Mr. Thrale's talked of his preface to Shakspeare as superior to Pope's, he said, 'I fear not, madam: the little fellow has done wonders.' "—*Anecd.* p. 42.—ED.]

the awful subject of our state beyond the grave, though they may think his opinion ill-founded, must think charitably of his sentiment:

"But, gracious God, how well dost thou provide
For erring judgments an unerring guide!
Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light,
A blaze of glory that forbids the sight.
O! teach me to believe thee thus conceal'd,
And search no farther than thyself reveal'd;
But Her alone for my director take,
Whom thou hast promised never to forsake.
My thoughtless youth was wing'd with vain desires;
My manhood, long misled by wand'ring fires,
Follow'd false lights; and when their glimpse was gone,
My pride struck out new sparkles of her own.
Such was I, such by nature still I am;
Be thine the glory and be mine the shame.
Good life be now my task: my doubts are done;
What more could shock my faith than Three in One?"

In drawing Dryden's character, Johnson has given, though I suppose unintentionally, some touches of his own. Thus: "The power that predominated in his intellectual operations was rather strong reason than quick sensibility. Upon all occasions that were presented, he studied rather than felt; and produced sentiments not such as nature enforces, but meditation supplies. With the simple and elemental passions, as they spring separate in the mind, he seems not much acquainted. He is, therefore, with all his variety of excellence, not often pathetick [1], and had so little sensibility of the power of effusions purely natural, that he did not esteem them in others." It may indeed be observed, that in all the numerous writings of Johnson, whether in prose or verse, and even in his tragedy, of which the subject is the distress of an unfortunate princess, there is not a single passage that ever drew a tear.

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF DRYDEN.

"The reason of this general perusal, Addison has attempted to [find in] *derive from* the delight which the mind feels in the investigation of secrets.

"His best actions are but [convenient] *inability of* wickedness.

"When once he had engaged himself in disputation [matter], *thoughts* flowed in on either side.

"The abyss of an un-ideal [emptiness] *vacancy*.

"These, like [many other harlots] *the harlots of other men*, had his love though not his approbation.

"He [sometimes displays] *descends to display* his knowledge with pedantick ostentation.

"French words which [were then used in] *had then crept into* conversation."

The Life of Pope [2] was written by Johnson *con amore*, both from the early possession which that writer had taken of his mind, and from the pleasure which he must have felt, in forever silencing all attempts to lessen his poetical fame, by demonstrating his excellence, and pronouncing the following triumphant eulogium:—"After all this, it is surely superfluous to answer the question that has once been asked, Whether Pope was a poet? otherwise than by asking in return, if Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumscribe poetry by a definition, will only show the narrowness of the definer; though a definition which shall exclude Pope will not easily be made. Let us look round upon the present time, and back upon the past; let us inquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims stated, and the pretensions of Pope will be no more disputed."

I remember once to have heard Johnson say, "Sir, a thousand years may elapse before there shall appear another man with a power of versification equal to that of Pope." That power must undoubtedly be allowed its due share in enhancing the value of his captivating composition.

Johnson, who had done liberal justice to Warburton in his edition of Shakspeare, which was published during the life of that powerful writer, with still greater liberality took an opportunity, in the Life of Pope, of paying the tribute due to him when he was no longer in "high place," but numbered with the dead [3].

[1] It seems to me, that there are many pathetic passages in Johnson's works both prose and verse. —KEARNEY.

[2] ["Mr. D'Israeli," as Mr. Chalmers observes, "has in the third volume of his 'Literary Curiosities,' favoured the public with an original memorandum of Dr. Johnson's, of hints for the 'Life of Pope,' written down as they were suggested to his mind in the course of his researches. This is none of the least of those gratifications which Mr. D'Israeli has so frequently administered to the lovers of literary history."—ED.]

[3] Of Johnson's conduct towards Warburton, a very honourable notice is taken by the editor of "*Tracts by Warburton, and a Warburtonian, not admitted into the collection of their respective works.*" After an able and "fond, though not undistinguishing," consideration of Warburton's character, he says, "In two immortal works, Johnson has stood forth in the foremost rank of his admirers. By the testimony of such a man, impertinence must be abashed, and malignity itself must be softened. Of literary merit, Johnson, as we all know, was a sagacious but a most severe judge. Such was his discernment, that he pierced into the most secret springs of hu-

It seems strange, that two such men as Johnson and Warburton, who lived in the same age and country, should not only not have been in any degree of intimacy, but been almost personally unacquainted. But such instances, though we must wonder at them, are not rare. If I am rightly informed, after a careful inquiry, they never met but once, which was at the house of Mrs. French, in London, well known for her elegant assemblies, and bringing eminent characters together. The interview proved to be mutually agreeable.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 213. [Sir John Hawkins, however, relates that to a person who asked "whether he had ever been in company with Dr. Warburton?" he answered, "I never saw him till one evening, about a week ago, at the Bishop of St. [Asaph's]: at first he looked surlily at me; but after we had been jostled into conversation, he took me to a window, asked me some questions, and before we parted was so well pleased with me, that he patted me." "You always, sir, preserved a respect for him?" "Yes, and justly; when as yet I was in no favour with the world, he spoke well of me [1], and I hope I never forgot the obligation."]

I am well informed, that Warburton said of Johnson, "I admire him, but I cannot bear his style:" and that Johnson being told of this, said, "That is exactly my case as to him." The manner in which he expressed his admiration of the fertility of Warburton's genius and of the variety of his materials, was "The table is always full, sir. He brings things from the north, and the south, and from every quarter. In his 'Divine Legation,' you are always entertained. He carries you round and round, without carrying you forward to the point, but then you have no wish to be carried forward." He said to the Reverend Mr. Strahan, "Warburton is perhaps the last man who has written with a mind full of reading and reflection"

[When a Scotsman was talking against Warburton, Johnson Ib. p. 208.

man actions; and such was his integrity, that he always weighed the moral characters of his fellow-creatures in the 'balance of the sanctuary' He was too courageous to propitiate a rival, and too proud to truckle to a superiour. Warburton he knew, as I know him, and as every man of sense and virtue would wish to be known,—I mean, both from his own writings, and from the writings of those who dissented from his principles or who envied his reputation. But, as to favours, he had never received or asked any from the bishop of Gloucester; and, if my memory fails me not, he had seen him only once, when they met almost without design, conversed without much effort, and parted without any lasting impression of hatred or affection. Yet, with all the ardour of sympathetic genius, Johnson had done 'that spontaneously and ably, which, by some writers, had been before attempted injudiciously, and which, by others, from whom more successful attempts might have been expected, has not *hitherto* been done at all. He spoke well of Warburton, without insulting those whom Warburton despised. He suppressed not the imperfections of this extraordinary man, while he endeavoured to do justice to his numerous and transcendental excellencies. He defended him when living, amidst the clamours of his enemies; and praised him when dead, amidst the *silence of his friends.*"—Having availed myself of the eulogy of this editor [*Dr. Parr*] on my departed friend, for which I warmly thank him, let me not suffer the lustre of his reputation, honestly acquired by profound learning and vigorous eloquence, to be tarnished by a charge of illiberality. He has been accused of invidiously dragging again into light certain writings of a person [*Bishop Hurd*] respectable by his talents, his learning, his station, and his age, which were published a great many years ago, and have since, it is said, been silently given up by their authour. But when it is considered that these writings were not *sins of youth*, but deliberate works of one well advanced in life, overflowing at once with flattery to a great man of great interest in the church, and with unjust and acrimonious abuse of two men of eminent merit; and that, though it would have been unreasonable to expect an humiliating recantation, no apology whatever has been made in the cool of the evening, for the oppressive fervour of the heat of the day; no slight relenting indication has appeared in any note, or any corner of later publications; is it not fair to understand him as superciliously persevering? When he allows the shafts to remain in the wounds, and will not stretch forth a lenient hand, is it wrong, is it not generous to become an indignant avenger?—Boswell. [Warburton himself did not feel—as Mr. Boswell was disposed to think he did—kindly or gratefully towards Johnson: for in one of his letters to a friend, he says, "The remarks he (Dr. Johnson) makes in every page on my commentaries, are full of insolent and malignant reflections, which, had they not in them as much folly as malignity, I should have had reason to be offended with. As it is, I think myself obliged to him in thus setting before the publick so many of my notes, with his remarks upon them: for though I have no great opinion of the trifling part of the publick, which pretends to judge of this part of literature, in which boys and girls decide, yet I think nobody can be mistaken in this comparison: though I think their thoughts have never yet extended thus far as to reflect, that to discover the corruption in an authour's text, and by a happy sagacity to restore it to sense, is no easy task: but when the discovery is made, then to cavil at the conjecture, to propose an equivalent, and defend nonsense, by producing out of the thick darkness it occasions a weak and faint glimmering of sense (which has been the business of this editor throughout), is the easiest, as well as the dullest, of all literary efforts."—*Warburton's Letters published by Bp. Hurd*, 8vo. 367.—Ed.]

[1] In his Preface to Shakspeare

said he had more literature than had been imported from Scotland since the days of Buchanan. Upon his mentioning other eminent writers of the Scots—"These will not do," said Johnson; "let us have some more of your northern lights; these are mere farthing candles."]

It is remarkable, that in the Life of Broome, Johnson takes notice of Dr. Warburton's using a mode of expression which he himself used, and that not seldom, to the great offence of those who did not know him. Having occasion to mention a note, stating the different parts which were executed by the associated translators of "The Odyssey," he says, "Dr. Warburton told me, in his warm language, that he thought the relation given in the note *a lie.*" The language is *warm* indeed; and, I must own, cannot be justified in consistency with a decent regard to the established forms of speech. Johnson had accustomed himself to use the word *lie*, to express a mistake or an errour in relation; in short, when the *thing was not so as told*, though the relater did not *mean* to deceive. When he thought there was intentional falsehood in the relater, his expression was, "He *lies*, and he *knows* he *lies.*"

Speaking of Pope's not having been known to excel in conversation, Johnson observes, that "traditional memory retains no sallies of raillery, or sentences of observation; nothing either pointed or solid, wise or merry; and that one apophthegm only is recorded." In this respect, Pope differed widely from Johnson, whose conversation was, perhaps, more admirable than even his writings, however excellent. Mr. Wilkes has, however, favoured me with one repartee of Pope, of which Johnson was not informed. Johnson, after justly censuring him for having "nursed in his mind a foolish disesteem of kings," tells us, "yet a little regard shown him by the Prince of Wales melted his obduracy; and he had not much to say when he was asked by his royal highness, *how he could love a prince while he disliked kings?*" The answer which Pope made was, "The young lion is harmless, and even playful; but when his claws are full grown, he becomes cruel, dreadful, and mischievous."

But although we have no collection of Pope's sayings, it is not therefore to be concluded, that he was not agreeable in social intercourse; for Johnson has been heard to say, that "the happiest conversation is that of which nothing is distinctly remembered, but a general effect of pleasing impression." The late Lord Somerville[1], who saw much both of great and brilliant life, told me, that he had dined in company with Pope, and that after dinner the *little man*, as he called him, drank his bottle of Burgundy[2], and was exceedingly gay and entertaining.

I cannot withhold from my great friend a censure of at least culpable inattention to a nobleman, who, it has been shown, behaved to him with uncommon politeness. He says, "except Lord Bathurst, none of Pope's noble friends were such as that a good man would wish to have his intimacy with them known to posterity." This will not apply to Lord Mansfield, who was not ennobled in Pope's life-time; but Johnson should have recollected, that Lord Marchmont was one of those noble friends[3]. He includes his lordship along with Lord Bolingbroke, in a charge of neglect of the papers which Pope left by his will; when, in truth, as I myself pointed out to him, before he wrote that poet's life, the papers were "committed to *the sole care and judgment* of Lord Bolingbroke, unless he (Lord Bolingbroke) shall not survive me;" so that Lord Marchmont has no concern whatever with them. After the first edition of the Lives, Mr. Malone, whose love of justice is equal to his accuracy, made, in my hearing, the same remark to Johnson; yet he omitted to correct the erroneous statement[4]. These particulars I mention, in the belief that there was only forgetfulness in my friend; but I owe this much to the Earl of Marchmont's reputation, who, were there no other memorials, will be im

[1] James Lord Somerville, who died in 1763.—MALONE [He was the 13th lord, and died in 1765.—ED.] Let me here express my grateful remembrance of Lord Somerville's kindness to me, at a very early period. He was the first person of high rank that took particular notice of me in the way most flattering to a young man, fondly ambitious of being distinguished for his literary talents; and by the honour of his encouragement made me think well of myself, and aspire to deserve it better. He had a happy art of communicating his varied knowledge of the world, in short remarks and anecdotes, with a quiet pleasant gravity, that was exceedingly engaging. Never shall I forget the hours which I enjoyed with him at his apartments in the royal palace of Holyrood House, and at his seat near Edinburgh, which he himself had formed with an elegant taste.—BOSWELL.

[2] [This must surely be a mistake; Pope never could have been in the *habit* of drinking a bottle of Burgundy at a sitting.—ED.]

[3] [He said, on a subsequent occasion, that another of Pope's noble friends, "Lord Peterborough, was a favourite of his." See *post*, 27th June, 1784.—ED.]

[4] This neglect, however, assuredly did not arise from any ill-will towards Lord Marchmont, but from inattention; just as he neglected to correct his statement concerning the family of Thomson, the poet, after it had been shown to be erroneous.—MALONE.

mortalized by that line of Pope, in the verses on his Grotto:

'And the bright flame was shot through Marchmont's soul."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF POPE.

"[Somewhat free] *sufficiently bold* in his criticism.

"All the gay [niceties] *varieties* of diction.

"Strikes the imagination with far [more] *greater* force.

"It is [probably] *certainly* the noblest version of poetry which the world has ever seen.

"Every sheet enabled him to write the next with [less trouble] *more facility*.

"No man sympathizes with [vanity depressed] *the sorrows of vanity*.

"It had been [criminal] *less easily excused*.

"When he [threatened to lay down] *talked of laying down* his pen.

"Society [is so named emphatically in opposition to] *politically regulated, is a state contra-distinguished from* a state of nature.

"A fictitious life of an [absurd] *infatuated* scholar.

"A foolish [contempt, disregard,] *disesteem* of kings.

"His hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows [were like those of other mortals] *acted strongly upon his mind.*

"Eager to pursue knowledge and attentive to [accumulate] *retain it.*

"A mind [excursive] *active*, ambitious, and adventurous.

"In its [noblest] *widest* searches still longing to go forward.

"He wrote in such a manner as might expose him to few [neglects] *hazards.*

"The [reasonableness] *justice* of my determination.

"A [favourite] *delicious* employment of the poets.

"More terrifick and more powerful [beings] *phantoms* perform on the stormy ocean.

"The inventor of [those] *this* petty [beings] *nation.*

"The [mind] *heart* naturally loves truth."

In the Life of Addison we find an unpleasing account of his having lent Steele a hundred pounds, and "reclaimed his loan by an execution." In the new edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, the authenticity of this anecdote is denied. But Mr. Malone has obliged me with the following note concerning it:—

"15th March, 1781.

"Many persons having doubts concerning this fact, I applied to Dr. Johnson, to learn on what authority he asserted it. He told me, he had it from Savage, who lived in intimacy with Steele, and who mentioned, that Steele told him the story with tears in his eyes. Ben Victor, Dr. Johnson said, likewise informed him of this remarkable transaction, from the relation of Mr. Wilkes the comedian, who was also an intimate of Steele's[1]. Some, in defence of Addison, have said, that 'the act was done with the good-natured view of rousing Steele, and correcting that profusion which always made him necessitous.' 'If that were the case,' said Johnson, 'and that he only wanted to alarm Steele, he would afterwards have *returned* the money to his friend, which it is not pretended he did.' 'This, too,' he added, 'might be retorted by an advocate for Steele, who might allege, that he did not repay the loan *intentionally*, merely to see whether Addison would be mean and ungenerous enough to make use of legal process to recover it[2]. But of such speculations there is no end: we cannot dive into the hearts of men; but their actions are open to observation.'

"I then mentioned to him that some people thought that Mr. Addison's character was so pure, that the fact, *though true*, ought to have been suppressed. He saw no reason for this. 'If nothing but the bright side of characters should be shown, we should sit down in despondency, and think it utterly impossible to imitate them in *any thing*. The sacred writers,' he observed, 'related the vicious as well as the virtuous actions of men; which had this moral effect, that it kept mankind from *despair*, into which otherwise they would naturally fall, were they not supported by the recollection that others had offended like themselves, and by penitence and amendment of life had been restored to the favour of Heaven[3].' "E. M."

[1] The late Mr. Burke informed me, in 1792, that Lady Dorothea Primrose, who died at a great age, I think in 1768, and had been well acquainted with Steele, told him the same story.—MALONE.

[2] [If the story be at all true—the most probable explanation is that which was given by Mr. Thomas Sheridan (see *post*, 15th April, 1781), namely, that it was a *friendly* execution put in to screen Steele's goods from hostile creditors. A not infrequent practice, nor quite unjustifiable, if the debt be real.—ED.]

[3] I have since observed, that Johnson has further enforced the propriety of exhibiting the faults of virtuous and eminent men in their true colours, in the last paragraph of the 164th Number of his Rambler. "It is particularly the duty of those who consign illustrious names to posterity, to take care lest their readers be misled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be justly condemned as an enemy to goodness, who suffers fondness or interest to confound right with wrong, or to shel-

The last paragraph of this note is of great importance; and I request that my readers may consider it with particular attention. It will be afterwards referred to in this work

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF ADDISON.

"[But he was our first example.] *He was, however, one of our earliest examples* of correctness.

"And [overlook] *despise* their masters.

"His instructions were such as the [state] *character* of his [own time] *readers* made [necessary] *proper*.

"His purpose was to [diffuse] *infuse* literary curiosity by gentle and unsuspected conveyance [among] *into* the gay, the idle, and the wealthy.

"Framed rather for those that [wish] *are learning* to write.

"Domestick [manners] *scenes*."

Piozzi, p. 125. [In the Life of Gay, the "female critic," as he calls her whose observation "that Gay was a poet of a lower order" he records, was his own wife.]

In his Life of Parnell, I wonder that Johnson omitted to insert an epitaph which he had long before composed for that amiable man, without ever writing it down, but which he was so good as, at my request, to dictate to me, by which means it has been preserved.

"Hic requiescit THOMAS PARNELL, S. T. P.

"Qui sacerdos pariter et poeta,
Utrasque partes ita implevit,
Ut neque sacerdoti suavitas poetæ,
Nec poetæ sacerdotis sanctitas, deesset."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF PARNELL.

"About three years [after] *afterwards*.

"[Did not much want] *was in no great need of* improvement.

"But his prosperity *did not last long* [was clouded with that which took away all his powers of enjoying either profit or pleasure, the death of his wife, whom he is said to have lamented with such sorrow, as hastened his end[1].] His end, whatever was the cause, was now approaching.

"In the Hermit, the [composition] *narrative*, as it is less airy, is less pleasing."

In the Life of Blackmore, we find tha writer's reputation generously cleared by Johnson from the cloud of prejudice which the malignity of contemporary wits had raised around it. In the spirited exertion of justice, he has been imitated by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his praise of the architecture of Vanburgh.

We trace Johnson's own character in his observations on Blackmore's "magnanimity as an authour." "The incessant attacks of his enemies, whether serious or merry, are never discovered to have disturbed his quiet, or to have lessened his confidence in himself." Johnson, I recollect, once told me, laughing heartily, that he understood it has been said of him, "He *appears* not to feel; but when he is *alone*, depend upon it, he *suffers sadly*." I am as certain as I can be of any man's real sentiments, that he *enjoyed* the perpetual shower of little hostile arrows, as evidences of his fame.

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF BLACKMORE.

"To [set] *engage* poetry [on the side] *in the cause* of virtue.

"He likewise [established] *enforced* the truth of Revelation.

"[Kindness] *benevolence* was ashamed to favour.

"His practice, which was once [very extensive] *invidiously great*.

"There is scarcely any distemper of dreadful name [of] which he has not [shown] *taught his reader* how [it is to be opposed] *to oppose*.

"Of this [contemptuous] *indecent* arrogance.

"[He wrote] *but produced* likewise a work of a different kind.

"At least [written] *compiled* with integrity.

"Faults which many tongues [were desirous] *would have made haste* to publish.

"But though he [had not] *could not boast of* much critical knowledge.

"He [used] *waited for* no felicities of fancy.

"Or had ever elated his [mind] *views* to that ideal perfection which every [mind] *genius* born to excel is condemned always to pursue and never to overtake.

"The [first great] *fundamental* principle of wisdom and of virtue."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF PHILIPS.

"His dreaded [rival] *antagonist* Pope.

"They [have not often much] *are not loaded with* thought.

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ter the faults which even the wisest and the best have committed, from that ignominy which guilt ought always to suffer, and with which it should be more deeply stigmatized, when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth; since we shall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unless its turpitude be laid open, and the eye secured from the deception of surrounding splendour."—MALONE.

[1] I should have thought that Johnson, who had felt the severe affliction from which Parnell never recovered, would have preserved this passage. He omitted it, doubtless, because he afterwards learned that however he might have lamented his wife, his end was hastened by other means.—MALONE.

"In his translation from Pindar, he [will not be denied to have reached] *found the art of reaching* all the obscurity of the Theban bard."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF CONGREVE.

"Congreve's conversation must surely have been *at least* equally pleasing with his writings.

"It apparently [requires] *presupposes* a similar knowledge of many characters.

"Reciprocation of [similes] *conceits.*

"The dialogue is quick and [various] *sparkling.*

"Love for Love; a comedy [more drawn from life] *of nearer alliance to life.*

"The general character of his miscellanies is, that they show little wit and [no] *little* virtue.

"[Perhaps] *certainly* he had not the fire requisite for the higher species of lyrick poetry."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF TICKELL

"[Longed] *long wished* to peruse it.

"At the [accession] *arrival* of King George [1].

"Fiction [unnaturally] *unskilfully* compounded of Grecian deities and Gothick fairies."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF AKENSIDE.

"For [another] *a different* purpose.

"[A furious] *an unnecessary* and outrageous zeal.

"[Something which] *what* he called and thought liberty.

"[A favourer of innovation] *lover of contradiction.*

"Warburton's [censure] *objections.*

"His rage [for liberty] *of patriotism.*

"Mr. Dyson with [a zeal] *an ardour* of friendship."

In the Life of Lyttelton, Johnson seems to have been not favourably disposed towards that nobleman. Mrs. Thrale suggests that he was offended by [Miss Hill Boothby's [2]] preference of his lordship to him [3]. [After mentioning the death of Mrs. Fitzherbert and Johnson's high admiration of her, she adds, "The friend of this lady, Miss Boothby [4], succeeded her in the management of Mr. Fitzherbert's family, and in the esteem of Dr. Johnson; though he told me, she pushed her piety to bigotry, her devotion to enthusiasm; that she somewhat disqualified herself for the duties of *this* life, by her perpetual aspirations after the *next:* such was, however, the purity of her mind, he said, and such the graces of her manner, that Lord Lyttelton and he used to strive for her preference with an emulation that occasioned hourly disgust, and ended in lasting animosity. 'You may see,' said he to me, 'when the Poets' Lives were printed, that dear Boothby is at my heart still. She would delight on that fellow Lyttelton's company all I could do, and I cannot forgive even his memory the preference given by a mind like hers.'" Baretti has been heard to say, that, when this lady died, Dr Johnson was almost distracted with grief, and that his friends about him had much to do to calm the violence of his emotions [5].] Piozzi, p. 124.

[1] [The reader will observe that the *whig* term "*accession,*" which might imply *legality*, was altered into a statement of the simple fact of King George's "*arrival.*"—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell had, instead of *Miss Boothby's* name, inserted that of *Molly Aston;* an error which he would not have forgiven to Mrs. Piozzi. —ED.]

[3] Let not my readers smile to think of Johnson's being a candidate for female favour; Mr. Peter Garrick assured me that he was told by a lady, that, in her opinion, Johnson was "a very *seducing man.*" Disadvantages of person and manner may be forgotten, where intellectual pleasure is communicated to a susceptible mind; and that Johnson was capable of feeling the most delicate and disinterested attachment appears from the following letter, which is published by Mrs. Thrale, with some others to the same person, of which the excellence is not so apparent:

"TO MISS BOOTHBY.

"January, 1755.

"DEAREST MADAM,—Though I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish, indeed, I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes; yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to, dearest, dearest madam, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[4] Miss Hill Boothby, who was the only daughter of Brook Boothby, Esq. and his wife, Elizabeth Fitzherbert, was somewhat older than Johnson. She was born October 27, 1708, and died January 16, 1757. Six Letters addressed to her by Johnson in the year 1755 are printed in Mrs. Piozzi's Collection; and a prayer composed by him on her death may be found in his "Prayers and Meditations." His affection for her induced him to preserve and bind up in a volume thirty-three of her Letters, which were purchased from the widow of his servant, Francis Barber, and published by R. Phillips in 1805.—MALONE.

[5] [Notwithstanding the mention of the "*heart*" in Mrs. Piozzi's anecdote and in the foregoing letter, there seems no reason to suppose that (as Miss Seward asserted) this was really an affair of

I can by no means join in the censure bestowed by Johnson on his lordship, whom he calls "poor Lyttelton," for returning thanks to the critical reviewers, for having "kindly commended" his "Dialogues of the Dead." Such "acknowledgments," says my friend, "never can be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice." In my opinion, the most upright man, who has been tried on a false accusation, may, when he is acquitted, make a bow to his jury. And when those, who are so much the arbiters of literary merit, as in a considerable degree to influence the public opinion, review an authour's work, *placido lumine*, when I am afraid mankind in general are better pleased with severity, he may surely express a grateful sense of their civility.

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF LYTTELTON.

"He solaced [himself] *his grief* by writing a long poem to her memory.

"The production rather [of a mind that means well, than thinks vigorously] *as it seems of leisure than of study, rather effusions than compositions.*

"His last literary [work] *production.*

["Found the way] *undertook* to persuade."

As the introduction to his critical examination of the genius and writings of Young, he did Mr. Herbert Croft, then a barrister of Lincoln's-inn, now a clergyman[1], the honour to adopt a Life of Young, written by that gentleman, who was the friend of Dr. Young's son, and wished to vindicate him from some very erroneous remarks to his prejudice. Mr. Croft's performance was subjected to the revision of Dr. Johnson, as appears from the following note to Mr. John Nichols[2]:

"This Life of Dr. Young was written by a friend of his son. What is crossed with black is expunged by the authour, what is crossed with red is expunged by me. If you find any thing more that can be well omitted, I shall not be sorry to see it yet shorter."

It has always appeared to me to have a considerable share of merit, and to display a pretty successful imitation of Johnson's style. When I mentioned this to a very eminent literary character[3], he opposed me vehemently, exclaiming, "No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp without his force; it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength." This was an image so happy, that one might have thought he would have been satisfied with it; but he was not. And setting his mind again to work, he added, with exquisite felicity, "It has all the contortions of the sibyl, without the inspiration."

Mr. Croft very properly guards us against supposing that Young was a gloomy man; and mentions, that "his parish was indebted to the good-humour of the authour of the 'Night Thoughts' for an assembly and a bowling-green." A letter from a noble foreigner is quoted, in which he is said to have been "very pleasant in conversation."

Mr. Langton, who frequently visited him, informs me that there was an air of benevolence in his manner, but that he could obtain from him less information than he had hoped to receive from one who had lived so much in intercourse with the brightest men of what has been called the Augustan age of England; and that he showed a degree of eager curiosity concerning the common occurrences that were then passing, which appeared somewhat remarkable in a man of such intellectual stores, of such an advanced age, and who had retired from life with declared disappointment in his expectations.

An instance at once of his pensive turn of mind, and his cheerfulness of temper,

the heart—"an early attachment" (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 29). The *other* letters, of which Boswell says that "their merit is not so apparent," (but which will be found in the Appendix), are written in still warmer terms of affection: Miss Boothby is "a sweet angel," and "a dear angel," and his "*heart* is full of tenderness;" but when the whole series of letters is read, it will be seen that the friendship began late in the life of both parties; that it was wholly *platonic*, or to speak more properly, *spiritual;* and that the letters in which these very affectionate expressions occur, were written when Johnson believed that Miss Boothby was *dying*. It must also be observed, that it is very unlikely that Johnson should *seriously* confess that he had been so unjust to Lord Lyttelton from any private pique; and it seems, by his letters to Mrs. Thrale (*ante*, 1st Aug. 1780, p. 236), that he had no such feeling towards Lyttelton, and that he had applied to his lordship's friends, to write the life; and finally, it is to be noted, Lord Lyttelton married his second lady in 1749, and Johnson does not seem to have known Miss Boothby till 1754. In short, the Editor has no doubt, nor will any one who reads the letters, and considers how little personal intercourse there could have been between Miss Boothby and Dr. Johnson, that the whole story is a mistake, founded, perhaps, on some confusion between Miss Boothby and Miss Aston, and countenanced, it must be admitted, by the warm expressions of the letters.—ED.]

[1] [Afterwards Sir Herbert Croft, bart. He died at Paris, after a residence of fifteen years in that city, April 27, 1816. See *Gent. Mag.* for May, 1816.—ED.]

[2] *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. iv p. 10.—BOSWELL.

[3] Mr. Burke.—MALONE.

appeared in a little story, which he himself told to Mr. Langton, when they were walking in his garden: "Here (said he) I had put a handsome sun-dial, with this inscription, *Eheu fugaces!* which (speaking with a smile) was sadly verified, for by the next morning my dial had been carried off[1]."

It gives me much pleasure to observe, that however Johnson may have casually talked, yet when he sits, as "an ardent judge zealous to his trust, giving sentence" upon the excellent works of Young, he allows them the high praise to which they are justly entitled. "The *Universal Passion*," says he, "is indeed a very great performance,—his distichs have the weight of solid sentiment, and his points the sharpness of resistless truth."

[The person spoken of in Johnson's strictures on the poetry of Young, "as a lady of whose praise he would have been justly proud," was Mrs. Thrale, who was a great admirer of Young, and one day forced Johnson to prefer Young's description of night to the so-much-admired ones of Dryden and Shakspeare, as more forcible and more general. Every reader is not either a lover or a tyrant, but every reader is interested when he hears that

Piozzi, p. 45.

"Creation sleeps; 't is as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and nature made a pause—
An awful pause—prophetic of its end."

"This," said he, "is true; but remember that taking the compositions of Young in general, they are but like bright stepping-stones over a miry road: Young froths, and foams, and bubbles, sometimes very vigorously; but we must not compare the noise made by your tea-kettle here with the roaring of the ocean."]

But I was most anxious concerning Johnson's decision upon "Night Thoughts," which I esteem as a mass of the grandest and richest poetry that human genius has ever produced; and was delighted to find this character of that work: "In his 'Night Thoughts,' he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflection and striking allusions: a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme, but with disadvantage." And afterwards, "Particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole; and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese plantation, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity."

But there is in this poem not only all that Johnson so well brings in view, but a power of the *pathetic* beyond almost any example that I have seen. He who does not feel his nerves shaken, and his heart pierced by many passages in this extraordinary work, particularly by that most affecting one, which describes the gradual torment suffered by the contemplation of an object of affectionate attachment visibly and certainly decaying into dissolution, must be of a hard and obstinate frame.

To all the other excellencies of "Night Thoughts" let me add the great and peculiar one, that they contain not only the noblest sentiments of virtue and contemplations on immortality, but the *christian sacrifice*, the *divine propitiation*, with all its interesting circumstances, and consolations to a "wounded spirit," solemnly and poetically displayed in such imagery and language, as cannot fail to exalt, animate, and soothe the truly pious. No book whatever can be recommended to young persons, with better hopes of seasoning their minds with *vital religion*, than "Young's Night Thoughts."

In the Life of Swift, it appears to me that Johnson had a certain degree of prejudice against that extraordinary man, of which I have elsewhere had occasion to speak. Mr. Thomas Sheridan imputed it to a supposed apprehension in Johnson, that Swift had not been sufficiently active in obtaining for him an Irish degree when it was solicited[2]; but of this there was not sufficient evidence; and let me not presume to charge Johnson with injustice, because he did not think so highly of the writings of this authour, as I have done from my youth upwards. Yet that he had an unfavourable bias is evident, were it only from that passage in which he speaks of Swift's practice of saving, as "first ridiculous, and at last detestable;" and yet, after some examination of circumstances, finds himself obliged to own, that "it will perhaps appear that he only liked one mode of expense better than another, and saved merely that he might have something to give."

One observation which Johnson makes in Swift's Life should be often inculcated: "It may be justly supposed, that there was in his conversation what appears so frequently in his letters, an affectation of

[1] The late Mr. James Ralph told Lord Macartney, that he passed an evening with Dr. Young at Lord Melcombe's (then Mr. Doddington), at Hammersmith. The doctor happening to go out into the garden, Mr. Doddington observed to him, on his return, that it was a dreadful night, as in truth it was, there being a violent storm of rain and wind. "No, sir," replied the doctor, "it is a very fine night. The Lord is abroad!"—Boswell.

[2] See vol. i. p. 50.

familiarity with the great, an ambition of momentary equality, sought and enjoyed by the neglect of those ceremonies which custom has established as the barriers between one order of society and another. This transgression of regularity was by himself and his admirers termed greatness of soul; but a great mind disdains to hold any thing by courtesy, and therefore never usurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity, puts himself in his power; he is either repelled with helpless indignity, or endured by clemency and condescension."

VARIOUS READINGS IN THE LIFE OF SWIFT

"Charity may be persuaded to think that it might be written by a man of *a* peculiar [opinions] *character*, without ill intention.

"He did not [disown] *deny* it.

"[To] *by* whose kindness it is not unlikely that he was [indebted for] *advanced to* his benefices.

"[With] *for* this purpose he had recourse to Mr. Harley.

"Sharpe, whom he [represents] *describes* as 'the harmless tool of others' hate.'

"Harley was slow because he was [irresolute] *doubtful*.

"When [readers were not many] *we were not yet a nation of readers*.

"[Every man who] *he that could say he* knew him.

"Every man of known influence has so many [more] petitions [than] *which* [he can] *cannot* grant, that he must necessarily offend more than he [can gratify] *gratifies*.

"Ecclesiastical [preferments] *benefices*.

"Swift [procured] *contrived* an interview.

["As a writer] *In his works* he has given very different specimens.

"On all common occasions he habitually [assumes] *affects* a style of [superiority] *arrogance*.

"By the [omission] *neglect* of those ceremonies.

"That their merits filled the world [and] *or that* there was no [room for] *hope of* more."

I have not confined myself to the order of the "Lives," in making my few remarks. Indeed a different order is observed in the original publication, and in the collection of Johnson's works. And should it be objected, that many of my various readings are inconsiderable, those who make an objection will be pleased to consider, that such small particulars are intended for those who are nicely critical in composition, to whom they will be an acceptable selection[1].

"Spence's Anecdotes," which are frequently quoted and referred to in Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," are in a manuscript collection, made by the Reverend Mr Joseph Spence[2], containing a number of particulars concerning eminent men. To each anecdote is marked the name of the person on whose authority it is mentioned This valuable collection is the property of the Duke of Newcastle, who, upon the application of Sir Lucas Pepys, was pleased to permit it to be put into the hands of Dr Johnson, who I am sorry to think made but an awkward return. "Great assistance," says he, "has been given me by Mr. Spence's Collection, of which I consider the communication as a favour worthy of publick acknowledgment:" but he has not owned to whom he was obliged; so that the acknowledgment is unappropriated to his grace.

While the world in general was filled with admiration of Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," there were narrow circles in which prejudice and resentment were fostered, and from which attacks of different sorts issued against him[3]. By some violent whigs he was arraigned of injustice to Milton; by some Cambridge men of depreciating Gray; and his expressing with a dignified freedom what he really thought of George, Lord Lyttelton, gave offence to some of the friends of that nobleman, and particularly produced a declaration of war against him from Mrs. Montagu, the ingenious essayist on Shakspeare, between

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[1] [Mr. Chalmers here records a curious literary anecdote—that when a new and enlarged edition of the "Lives of the Poets" was published in 1783, Mr. Nichols, in justice to the purchasers of the preceding editions, printed the additions in a separate pamphlet, and advertised thatit might be had *gratis*. Not ten copies were called for. It may be presumed that the owners of the former editions had *bound* their sets; but it must also be observed, that the alterations were not considerable.—ED.]

[2] The Rev. Joseph Spence, A. M. Rector of Great Harwood in Buckinghamshire, and Prebendary of Durham, died at Byfleet in Surrey, August 20, 1768. He was a fellow of New College in Oxford, and held the office of Professor of Poetry in that University from 1728 to 1738.—MALONE. [See *ante*, p. 228. *n.*—ED.]

[3] From this disreputable class, I except an ingenious though not satisfactory defence of Hammond, which I did not see till lately, by the favour of its authour, my amiable friend, the Reverend Mr. Bevil, who published it without his name. It is a juvenile performance, but elegantly written, with classical enthusiasm of sentiment, and yet with a becoming modesty, and great respect for Dr. Johnson.—BOSWELL.

whom and his lordship a commerce of reciprocal compliments had long been carried on. In this war the smaller powers in alliance with him were of course led to engage, at least on the defensive, and thus I for one was excluded[1] from the enjoyment of "A Feast of Reason," such as Mr. Cumberland has described, with a keen yet just and delicate pen, in his "Observer." These minute inconveniences gave not the least disturbance to Johnson. He nobly said, when I talked to him of the feeble though shrill outcry which had been raised, "Sir, I considered myself as intrusted with a certain portion of truth. I have given my opinion sincerely; let them show where they think me wrong."

While my friend is thus contemplated in the splendour derived from his last and perhaps most admirable work, I introduce him with peculiar propriety as the correspondent of Warren Hastings! a man whose regard reflects dignity even upon Johnson; a man, the extent of whose abilities was equal to that of his power; and who, by those who are fortunate enough to know him in private life, is admired for his literature and taste, and beloved for the candour, moderation, and mildness of his character. Were I capable of paying a suitable tribute of admiration to him, I should certainly not withhold it at a moment[2] when it is not possible that I should be suspected of being an interested flatterer. But how weak would be my voice after that of the millions whom he governed! His condescending and obliging compliance with my solicitation, I with humble gratitude acknowledge; and while by publishing his letter to me, accompanying the valuable communication, I do eminent honour to my great friend, I shall entirely disregard any invidious suggestions that, as I in some degree participate in the honour, I have, at the same time, the gratification of my own vanity in view.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Park-lane, 2d Dec. 1730.

"SIR,—I have been fortunately spared the troublesome suspense of a long search, to which, in performance of my promise, I had devoted this morning, by lighting upon the objects of it among the first papers that I laid my hands on; my veneration for your great and good friend, Dr. Johnson, and the pride, or I hope something of a better sentiment, which I indulge in possessing such memorials of his good will towards me, having induced me to bind them in a parcel containing other select papers, and labelled with the titles appertaining to them. They consist but of three letters, which I believe were all that I ever received from Dr. Johnson. Of these, one, which was written in quadruplicate, under the different dates of its respective despatches, has already been made publick, but not from any communication of mine. This, however, I have joined to the rest; and have now the pleasure of sending them to you, for the use to which you informed me it was your desire to destine them.

"My promise was pledged with the condition, that if the letters were found to contain any thing which should render them improper for the publick eye, you would dispense with the performance of it. You will have the goodness, I am sure, to pardon my recalling this stipulation to your recollection, as I shall be loth to appear negligent of that obligation which is always implied in an epistolary confidence. In the reservation of that right I have read them over with the most scrupulous attention, but have not seen in them the slightest cause on that ground to withhold them from you. But, though not on that, yet on another ground I own I feel a little, yet but a little, reluctance to part with them: I mean on that of my own credit, which I fear will suffer by the information conveyed by them, that I was early in the possession of such valuable instructions for the beneficial employment of the influence of my late station, and (as it may seem) have so little availed myself of them. Whether I could, if it were necessary, defend myself against such an imputation, it little concerns the world to know. I look only to the effect which these relicks may produce, considered as evidences of the virtues of their author: and believing that they will be found to display an uncommon warmth of private friendship, and a mind ever attentive to the improvement and extension of useful knowledge, and solicitous for the interests of mankind, I can cheerfully submit to the little sacrifice of my own fame, to contribute to the illustration of so great and venerable a character. They cannot be better applied for that end, than by being intrusted to your hands. Allow me, with this offering, to infer from it a proof of the very great esteem with which I have the honour to profess myself, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"WARREN HASTINGS.

"P. S. At some future time, and when you have no further occasion for these papers, I shall be obliged to you if you will return them."

The last of the three letters thus gracious-

[1] [Mr. Boswell has always appeared willing to record Dr. Johnson's sarcasms against Mrs. Montagu, leaving unnoticed many expressions of regard and respect of which he could not have been ignorant. Could the circumstance alluded to in the text have biassed him?—ED.]

[2] January, 1791.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Hastings's impeachment was still pending.—ED.]

ly put into my hands, and which has already appeared in publick, belongs to this year; but I shall previously insert the first two in the order of their dates. They altogether form a grand group in my biographical picture.

"TO THE HONOURABLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

"30th March, 1774.

"SIR,—Though I have had but little personal knowledge of you, I have had enough to make me wish for more; and though it be now a long time since I was honoured by your visit, I had too much pleasure from it to forget it. By those whom we delight to remember, we are unwilling to be forgotten; and therefore I cannot omit this opportunity of reviving myself in your memory by a letter which you will receive from the hands of my friend Mr. Chambers [1]; a man whose purity of manners and vigour of mind are sufficient to make every thing welcome that he brings.

"That this is my only reason for writing will be too apparent by the uselessness of my letter to any other purpose. I have no questions to ask; not that I want curiosity after either the ancient or present state of regions in which have been seen all the power and splendour of wide-extended empire; and which, as by some grant of natural superiority, supply the rest of the world with almost all that pride desires and luxury enjoys. But my knowledge of them is too scanty to furnish me with proper topicks of inquiry: I can only wish for information; and hope that a mind comprehensive like yours will find leisure, amidst the cares of your important station, to inquire into many subjects of which the European world either thinks not at all, or thinks with deficient intelligence and uncertain conjecture. I shall hope that he who once intended to increase the learning of his country by the introduction of the Persian language will examine nicely the traditions and histories of the East; that he will survey the wonders of its ancient edifices, and trace the vestiges of its ruined cities; and that, at his return, we shall know the arts and opinions of a race of men from whom very little has been hitherto derived.

"You, sir, have no need of being told by me how much may be added by your attention and patronage to experimental knowledge and natural history. There are arts of manufacture practised in the countries in which you preside, which are yet very imperfectly known here, either to artificers or philosophers. Of the natural productions, animate and inanimate, we yet have so little intelligence, that our books are filled, I fear, with conjectures about things which an Indian peasant knows by his senses.

"Many of those things my first wish is to see; my second to know, by such accounts as a man like you will be able to give.

"As I have not skill to ask proper questions, I have likewise no such access to great men as can enable me to send you any political information. Of the agitations of an unsettled government, and the struggles of a feeble ministry, care is doubtless taken to give you more exact accounts than I can obtain. If you are inclined to interest yourself much in public transactions, it is no misfortune to you to be distant from them.

"That literature is not totally forsaking us, and that your favourite language is not neglected, will appear from the book [2], which I should have pleased myself more with sending, if I could have presented it bound: but time was wanting. I beg, however, sir, that you will accept it from a man very desirous of your regard; and that if you think me able to gratify you by any thing more important you will employ me.

"I am now going to take leave, perhaps a very long leave, of my dear Mr. Chambers. That he is going to live where you govern may justly alleviate the regard of parting: and the hope of seeing both him and you again, which I am not willing to mingle with doubt, must at present comfort as it can, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. HASTINGS.

"London, 20th Dec. 1774.

"SIR,—Being informed that by the departure of a ship there is now an opportunity of writing to Bengal, I am unwilling to slip out of your memory by my own negligence, and therefore take the liberty of reminding you of my existence by sending you a book which is not yet made publick.

"I have lately visited a region less remote and less illustrious than India, which afforded some occasions for speculation. What has occurred to me, I have put into the volume [3], of which I beg your acceptance.

"Men in your station seldom have presents totally disinterested: my book is received, let me now make my request.

"There is, sir, somewhere within your government, a young adventurer, one Chauncey Lawrence, whose father is one of my oldest friends. Be pleased to show the young man what countenance is fit, whether he wants to be restrained by your

[1] Afterwards Sir Robert Chambers, one of his majesty's judges in India.—BOSWELL.

[2] Jones's "Persian Grammar."—BOSWELL.

[3] "The Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland."—BOSWELL.

authority, or encouraged by your favour. His father is now president of the college of physicians; a man venerable for his knowledge, and more venerable for his virtue.

"I wish you a prosperous government, a safe return, and a long enjoyment of plenty and tranquillity. I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] DR. JOHNSON TO MR. HASTINGS.

"9th January, 1761.

"SIR,—Amidst the importance and multiplicity of affairs in which your great office engages you, I take the liberty of recalling your attention for a moment to literature, and will not prolong the interruption by an apology which your character makes needless.

"Mr. Hoole, a gentleman long known and long esteemed in India-house, after having translated Tasso, has undertaken Ariosto. How well he is qualified for his undertaking he has already shown. He is desirous, sir, of your favour in promoting his proposals, and flatters me by supposing that my testimony may advance his interest.

"It is a new thing for a clerk of the India-house to translate poets;—it is new for a governor of Bengal to patronise learning. That he may find his ingenuity rewarded, and that learning may flourish under your protection, is the wish of, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote to him in February, complaining of having been troubled by a recurrence of the perplexing question of Liberty and Necessity; and mentioning that I hoped soon to meet him again in London.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. BOSWELL.

"14th March, 1781.

"DEAR SIR,—I hoped you had got rid of all this hypocrisy of misery. What have you to do with Liberty and Necessity? Or what more than to hold your tongue about it? Do not doubt but I shall be most heartily glad to see you here again, for I love every part about you but your affectation of distress.

"I have at last finished my Lives, and have laid up for you a load of copy, all out of order; so that it will amuse you a long time to set it right. Come to me, my dear Bozzy, and let us be as happy as we can. We will go again to the Mitre, and talk old times over. I am, dear sir, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

On Monday, March 19, I arrived in London, and on Tuesday, the 20th, met him in Fleet-street, walking, rather indeed moving along; for his peculiar march is thus described in a very just and picturesque manner, in a short Life[1] of him published very soon after his death:—"When he walked the streets, what with the constant roll of his head, and the concomitant motion of his body, he appeared to make his way by that motion, independent of his feet[2]." That he was often much stared at while he advanced in this manner may easily be believed; but it was not safe to make sport of one so robust as he was. Mr. Langton saw him one day, in a fit of absence, by a sudden start, drive the load off a porter's back, and walk forward briskly, without being conscious of what he had done. The porter was very angry, but stood still, and eyed the huge figure with much earnestness, till he was satisfied that his wisest course was to be quiet, and take up his burthen again.

Our accidental meeting in the street after a long separation was a pleasing surprise to us both. He stepped aside with me into Falcon-court, and made kind inquiries about my family; and as we were in a hurry, going different ways, I promised to call on him next day. He said he was engaged to go out in the morning. "Early, sir?" said I. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a London morning does not go with the sun."

I waited on him next evening, and he gave me a great portion of his original manuscript of his "Lives of the Poets," which he had preserved for me.

I found on visiting his friend, Mr. Thrale, that he was now very ill, and had removed, I suppose by the solicitation of Mrs. Thrale, to a house in Grosvenor-square. I was sorry to see him sadly changed in his appearance.

He told me I might now have the pleasure to see Dr. Johnson drink wine again, for he had lately returned to it. When I mentioned this to Johnson, he said, "I drink it now sometimes, but not socially." The first evening that I was with him at Thrale's, I observed he poured a large quantity of it into a glass, and swallowed it greedily. Every thing about his character and manners was forcible and violent; there never was any moderation. Many a day did he fast, many a year did he refrain from wine: but when he did eat, it was voraciously; when he did drink wine, it was copiously. He could practise abstinence[3], but not temperance.

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[1] Published by Kearsley, with this well-chosen motto:

"————From his cradle
He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one
And, to add greater honours to his age
Than man could give him, he died fearing Heaven.
SHAKSPEARE.

[2] [See Miss Reynolds's *Recollections*, in the Appendix, for a fuller account of Johnson's extraordinary gestures.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 208.—ED.]

Mrs. Thrale and I had a dispute whether Shakspeare or Milton had drawn the most admirable picture of a man[1]. I was for Shakspeare, Mrs. Thrale for Milton; and, after a fair hearing, Johnson decided for my opinion.

I told him of one of Mr. Burke's playful sallies upon Dean Marlay[2]: "I don't like the Deanery of *Ferns;* it sounds so like a *barren* title." "Dr. *Heath* should have it," said I. Johnson laughed, and, condescending to trifle in the same mode of conceit, suggested Dr. *Moss.*

He said, "Mrs. Montagu has dropt me[3]. Now, sir, there are people whom one should like very well to drop, but would not wish to be dropped by." He certainly was vain of the society of ladies, and could make himself very agreeable to them when he chose it: Sir Joshua Reynolds agreed with me that he could. Mr. Gibbon, with his usual sneer, controverted it, perhaps in resentment of Johnson's having talked with some disgust of his ugliness, which one would think a *philosopher* would not mind. Dean Marlay wittily observed, "A lady may be vain when she can turn a wolf-dog into a lap-dog."

The election for Ayrshire, my own county, was this spring tried upon a petition before a committee of the house of commons. I was one of the counsel for the sitting member[4], and took the liberty of previously stating different points to Johnson, who never failed to see them clearly, and to supply me with some good hints He dictated to me the following note upon the registration of deeds:

"All laws are made for the convenience of the community. What is legally done should be legally recorded, that the state of things may be known, and that wherever evidence is requisite, evidence may be had. For this reason, the obligation to frame and establish a legal register is enforced by a legal penalty, which penalty is the want of that perfection and plenitude of right which a register would give. Thence it follows that this is not an objection merely legal; for the reason on which the law stands being equitable makes it an equitable objection."

"This," said he, "you must enlarge on, when speaking to the committee. You must not argue there as if you were arguing in the schools; close reasoning will not fix their attention: you must say the same thing over and over again in different words. If you say it but once, they miss it in a moment of inattention. It is unjust, sir, to censure lawyers for multiplying words when they argue; it is often *necessary* for them to multiply words."

His notion of the duty of a member of parliament, sitting upon an election-committee, was very high; and when he was told of a gentleman upon one of those committees, who read the newspapers part of the time, and slept the rest, while the merits of a vote were examined by the counsel; and as an excuse, when challenged by the chairman for such behaviour, bluntly answered, "I had made up my mind upon that case;" Johnson, with an indignant contempt, said, "If he was such a rogue as to make up his mind upon a case without hearing it, he should not have been such a fool as to tell it." "I think," said Mr. Dudley Long[5], now North, "the Doctor has pretty plainly made him out to be both rogue and fool."

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[1] Shakspeare makes Hamlet thus describe his father:

"See what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald, Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man."

Milton thus portrays our first parent, Adam:

"His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad."—
BOSWELL.

The latter part of this description, "but not beneath," &c. may very probably be ascribed to Milton's prejudices in favour of the puritans, who had a great aversion to *long* hair.—MALONE. It is strange that the picture drawn by the unlearned Shakspeare should be full of classical images, and that by the learned Milton void of them. Milton's description appears to be more picturesque. —KEARNEY. [Dr. Kearney seems to have forgotten that Milton is here a mere *descriptive* poet, giving a kind of abstract delineation of the first man, while Shakspeare is a *dramatist*, speaking in the *character* of an enthusiastic youth, fresh from his studies, and boiling with indignation and grief, which he endeavours to conceal, or at least to moderate by these classical and, what in any other case would be, pedantic allusions.—ED.]

[2] Dr. Richard Marlay, afterwards Lord Bishop of Waterford; a very amiable, benevolent, and ingenious man. He was chosen a member of the Literary Club in 1777, and died in Dublin, July 2, 1802, in his seventy-fifth year.—MALONE. [The Editor had, in very early life, the honour of the bishop's acquaintance and indulgent notice of his first attempts in literature. He was all that Mr. Malone says of him.—ED.]

[3] [Mrs. Montagu, with, perhaps an over-nicety of feeling, *dropped him* on account of his Life of Lord Lyttelton. See *ante*, p. 276.—ED.

[4] [Hugh Montgomery, Esq. The petitioner, however, William Macdowall, Esq., was declared duly elected.—ED.]

[5] [This ingenious and very pleasant gentleman died in 1829, after an illness which had for some years secluded him from society.—ED.]

Johnson's profound reverence for the hierarchy made him expect from bishops the highest degree of decorum; he was offended even at their going to taverns: "A bishop," said he, "has nothing to do at a tippling-house. It is not indeed immoral in him to go to a tavern; neither would it be immoral in him to whip a top in Grosvenor-square: but, if he did, I hope the boys would fall upon him, and apply the whip to *him*. There are gradations in conduct; there is morality,—decency,—propriety. None of these should be violated by a bishop. A bishop should not go to a house where he may meet a young fellow leading out a wench." BOSWELL. "But, sir, every tavern does not admit women." JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, any tavern will admit a well-dressed man and a well-dressed woman. They will not perhaps admit a woman whom they see every night walking by their door in the street. But a well-dressed man may lead in a well-dressed woman to any tavern in London. Taverns sell meat and drink, and will sell them to any body who can eat and can drink. You may as well say that a mercer will not sell silks to a woman of the town."

He also disapproved of bishops going to routs; at least of their staying at them longer than their presence commanded respect. He mentioned a particular bishop. "Poh!" said Mrs. Thrale, "the Bishop of — ———[1] is never minded at a rout." BOSWELL. "When a bishop places himself in a situation where he has no distinct character, and is of no consequence, he degrades the dignity of his order." JOHNSON. "Mr. Boswell, madam, has said it as correctly as it could be."

Nor was it only in the dignitaries of the church that Johnson required a particular decorum and delicacy of behaviour; he justly considered that the clergy, as persons set apart for the sacred office of serving at the altar, and impressing the minds of men with the awful concerns of a future state, should be somewhat more serious than the generality of mankind, and have a suitable composure of manners. A due sense of the dignity of their profession, independent of higher motives, will ever prevent them from losing their distinction in an indiscriminate sociality; and did such as affect this know how much it lessens them in the eyes of those whom they think to please by it, they would feel themselves much mortified.

Johnson and his friend Beauclerk were once together in company with several clergymen, who thought that they should appear to advantage by assuming the lax jollity of *men of the world;* which, as it may be observed in similar cases, they carried to noisy excess. Johnson, who they expected would be *entertained*, sat grave and silent for some time; at last, turning to Beauclerk, he said, by no means in a whisper, "This merriment of parsons is mighty offensive."

Even the dress of a clergyman should be in character, and nothing can be more despicable than conceited attempts at avoiding the appearance of the clerical order; attempts which are as ineffectual as they are pitiful. Dr. Porteus, now Bishop of London, in his excellent charge when presiding over the diocese of Chester, justly animadverts upon this subject; and observes of a reverend fop, that he "can be but *half a beau.*"

Addison, in "The Spectator," has given us a fine portrait of a clergyman, who is supposed to be a member of his *Club;* and Johnson has exhibited a model, in the character of Mr. Mudge[2], which has escaped the collectors of his works, but which he owned to me, and which indeed he showed to Sir Joshua Reynolds at the time when it was written. It bears the genuine marks of Johnson's best manner, and is as follows:

"The Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, prebendary of Exeter, and vicar of St. Andrew's in Plymouth; a man equally eminent for his virtues and abilities, and at once be loved as a companion and reverenced as a pastor. He had that general curiosity to which no kind of knowledge is indifferent or superfluous; and that general benevolence by which no order of men is hated or despised.

"His principles both of thought and action were great and comprehensive. By a solicitous examination of objections, and judicious comparison of opposite arguments, he attained what inquiry never gives but to industry and perspicuity, a firm and unshaken settlement of conviction. But his firmness was without asperity; for, knowing with how much difficulty truth was sometimes found, he did not wonder that many missed it.

"The general course of his life was determined by his profession; he studied the sacred volumes in the original languages; with what diligence and success his 'Notes upon the Psalms' give sufficient evidence He once endeavoured to add the knowledge of Arabic to that of Hebrew; but, finding his thoughts too much diverted from other studies, after some time desisted from his purpose.

"His discharge of parochial duties was exemplary. How his sermons were composed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the publick; but how they were delivered can be known only to those that heard them; for, as he

[1] [St. Asaph's. See *ante*, p. 233.—ED.]

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 164.—BOSWELL.

appeared in the pulpit, words will not easily describe him. His delivery, though unconstrained, was not negligent; and though forcible, was not turbulent; disdaining anxious nicety of emphasis, and laboured artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity; it roused the sluggish and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon the subject without directing it to the speaker.

"The grandeur and solemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behaviour: at the table of his friends he was a companion communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulness, willing to please, and easy to be pleased. His acquaintance was universally solicited, and his presence obstructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though studious, he was popular; though argumentative, he was modest; though inflexible, he was candid; and though metaphysical, yet orthodox[1]."

On Friday, March 30, I dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with the Earl of Charlemont, Sir Annesley Stewart, Mr. Eliot of Port-Eliot, Mr. Burke, Dean Marlay, Mr. Langton; a most agreeable day, of which I regret that every circumstance is not preserved: but it is unreasonable to require such a multiplication of felicity.

Mr. Eliot, with whom Dr. Walter Harte[2] had travelled, talked to us of his "History of Gustavus Adolphus," which he said was a very good book in the German translation. JOHNSON. "Harte was excessively vain. He put copies of his book in manuscript into the hands of Lord Chesterfield and Lord Granville, that they might revise it. Now how absurd was it to suppose that two such noblemen would revise so big a manuscript! Poor man! he left London the day of the publication of his book, that he might be out of the way of the great praise he was to receive; and he was ashamed to return when he found how ill his book had succeeded. It was unlucky in coming out on the same day with Robertson's 'History of Scotland.' His husbandry, however, is good." BOSWELL. "So he was fitter for that than for heroick history: he did well, when he turned his sword into a ploughshare."

Mr. Eliot mentioned a curious liquor peculiar to his country, which the Cornish fishermen drink. They call it *mahogany*, and it is made of two parts gin and one part treacle, well beaten together. I begged to have some of it made, which was done with proper skill by Mr. Eliot. I thought it very good liquor; and said it was a counterpart of what is called *Athol porridge* in the Highlands of Scotland, which is a mixture of whiskey and honey. Johnson said, "that must be a better liquor than the Cornish, for both its component parts are better." He also observed, "*Mahogany* must be a modern name; for it is not long since the wood called mahogany was known in this country." I mentioned his scale of liquors[3]:—claret for boys,—port for men,—brandy for heroes. "Then," said Mr Burke, "let me have claret: I love to be a boy; to have the careless gayety of boyish days." JOHNSON. "I should drink claret too, if it would give me that; but it does not: it neither makes boys men, nor men boys. You 'll be drowned[3] by it before it has any effect upon you."

I ventured to mention a ludicrous paragraph in the newspapers, that Dr. Johnson was learning to dance of Vestris. Lord Charlemont, wishing to excite him to talk, proposed, in a whisper, that he should be asked whether it was true. "Shall I ask him?" said his lordship. We were, by a great majority, clear for the experiment. Upon which his lordship very gravely, and with a courteous air, said, "Pray, sir, is it true that you are taking lessons of Vestris?" This was risking a good deal, and required the boldness of a general of Irish volunteers to make the attempt. Johnson was at first startled, and in some heat answered, "How can your lordship ask so simple a question?" But immediately recovering himself, whether from unwillingness to be deceived or to appear deceived, or whether from real good humour, he kept up the joke: "Nay, but if any body were to answer the paragraph, and contradict it, I'd have a reply, and would say, that he who contradicted it was no friend either to Vestris or me. For why should not Dr. Johnson add to his other powers a little corporeal agility? Socrates learnt to dance at an advanced age, and Cato learnt Greek at an advanced age. Then it might proceed to say, that this Johnson, not content with dancing on the ground, might dance on the rope; and they might introduce the elephant dancing on the rope. A nobleman[4]

[1] "London Chronicle," May 2, 1769. This respectable man is there mentioned to have died on the third of April, that year, at Cofflect, the seat of Thomas Veale, Esq., in his way to London. —BOSWELL.

[2] [Mr. Elliot had accompanied Mr. Stanhope, the natural son of Lord Chesterfield, for whom the celebrated letters were written, and is frequently mentioned in them. Mr. Harte was travelling tutor to both these young gentlemen: see *ante*, vol i. p. 168.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 207.—ED.]

[4] William, the first Viscount Grimston. [Lord Charlemont was far from being pleased with Mr. Boswell's having published this conversation "His lordship thought the whole plan of Mr. Boswell's work incompatible with the freedom and indeed sacredness of social intercourse."—*Hardy's*

wrote a play called 'Love in a Hollow Tree.' He found out that it was a bad one, and therefore wished to buy up all the copies and burn them. The Duchess of Marlborough had kept one; and when he was against her at an election, she had a new edition of it printed, and prefixed to it, as a frontispiece, an elephant dancing on a rope, to show that his lordship's writing comedy was as awkward as an elephant dancing on a rope."

Piozzi, p. 4. [Dr. Johnson was always jealous of his reputation for personal activity, and sometimes exhibited it with very strange vehemence. One day when he saw Mr. Thrale leap over a cabriolet stool, to show that he was not tired after a chase of fifty miles or more, *he* suddenly jumped over it too; but in a way so strange and so unwieldy, that our terror, lest he should break his bones, took from us even the power of laughing.] [Miss Reyn. Recoll. Reynolds relates that Dr. Johnson was very ambitious of excelling in common acquirements, as well as the uncommon, and particularly in feats of activity. One day, as he was walking in Gunisbury Park (or Paddock) with some gentlemen and ladies, who were admiring the extraordinary size of some of the trees, one of the gentlemen remarked that, when he was a boy, he made nothing of climbing (*swarming*, she thought was the phrase) the largest there. "Why, I can swarm it now," replied Dr. Johnson, which excited a hearty laugh—(he was then between fifty and sixty); on which he ran to the tree, clung round the trunk, and ascended to the branches, and, Miss Reynolds believes, would have gone in amongst them, had he not been very earnestly entreated to descend, and down he came with a triumphant air, seeming *to make nothing of it*.

At another time, at a gentleman's seat in Devonshire, as he and some company were sitting in a saloon, before which was a spacious lawn, it was remarked as a very proper place for running a race. A young lady present boasted that she could outrun any person; on which Dr. Johnson rose up and said, "Madam, you cannot outrun me;" and, going out on the lawn, they started. The lady at first had the advantage; but Dr. Johnson happening to have slippers on much too small for his feet, kicked them off up into the air, and ran a great length without them, leaving the lady far behind him, and, having won the victory, he returned, leading her by the hand, with looks of high exultation and delight[1].]

On Sunday, April 1, I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's, with Sir Philip Jennings Clerk[2] and Mr. Perkins[3], who had the superintendence of Mr. Thrale's brewery, with a salary of five hundred pounds a year. Sir Philip had the appearance of a gentleman of ancient family, well advanced in life. He wore his own white hair in a bag of goodly size, a black velvet coat, with an embroidered waistcoat, and very rich laced ruffles; which Mrs. Thrale said were old fashioned, but which, for that reason, I thought the more respectable, more like a tory; yet Sir Philip was then in opposition in parliament. "Ah, sir," said Johnson, "ancient ruffles and modern principles do not agree." Sir Philip defended the opposition to the American war ably and with temper, and I joined him. He said the majority of the nation was against the ministry. JOHNSON. "*I*, sir, am against the ministry; but it is for having too little of that of which opposition thinks they have too much. Were I minister, if any man wagged his finger against me, he should be turned out; for that which it is in the power of government to give at pleasure to one or to another should be given to the supporters of government. If you will not oppose at the expense of losing your place, your opposition will not be honest, you will feel no serious grievance; and the present opposition is only a contest to get what others have. Sir Robert Walpole acted as I would do. As to the American war, the *sense* of the nation is *with* the ministry. The majority of those who can *understand* is with it; the majority of those who can only *hear* is against it; and as those who can only hear are more numerous than those who can understand, and opposition is always loudest, a majority of the rabble will be for opposition."

This boisterous vivacity entertained us; but the truth in my opinion was that those who could understand the best were against the American war, as almost every man now is, when the question has been coolly considered.

Mrs. Thrale gave high praise to Mr Dudley Long[4] (now North). JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear lady, don't talk so. Mr. Long's character is very *short*. It is nothing. He fills a chair. He is a man of

Life of Charlemont, vol. i. p. 401. Without stopping here to discuss Lord Charlemont's principle, the Editor may observe that Mr. Hardy represents Lord Charlemont as having felt some *personal* dissatisfaction on this occasion, for which surely there was not much reason.—ED.]

[1] [This exhibition occurred during his visit to Devonshire in 1762, at the house of the lady to whom he made the avowal mentioned *ante*, vol i. p. 164.—ED.]

[2] [Sir P. J. Clerk, Bart., member for Totness in several parliaments, was, at this time, in very active opposition to the government.— ED.]

[3] [See vol. i. p. 494.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 283.—ED.]

genteel appearance, and that is all[1]. I know nobody who blasts by praise as you do: for whenever there is exaggerated praise, every body is set against a character. They are provoked to attack it. Now there is Pepys[2]: you praised that man with such disproportion, that I was incited to lessen him, perhaps more than he deserves. His blood is upon your head. By the same principle, your malice defeats itself; for your censure is too violent. And yet (looking to her with a leering smile) she is the first woman in the world, could she but restrain that wicked tongue of hers;—she would be the only woman, could she but command that little whirligig."

Ed. [Between Johnson and Pepys there was no cordiality, and Johnson's dislike was certainly increased, if not caused, by some degree of jealousy at the regard which Mrs. Thrale had for Pepys; and as the latter would not tamely submit to Johnson's violence, there were sometimes Piozzi, Anec. p. 109. stormy scenes between them.] [On one occasion, when he had provoked Mr. Pepys, till something much too like a quarrel was grown up between them, the moment he was gone, "Now," says Dr. Johnson, "is Pepys gone home hating me, who love him better than I did before. He spoke in defence of his dead friend; but though I hope *I* spoke better who spoke against him, yet all my eloquence will gain me nothing but an honest man for my enemy!" He did not, however, cordially love Mr. Pepys, though he respected his abilities. "I knew the dog was a scholar," said he, when they had been disputing about the classics for three hours together one morning at Streatham; "but that he had so much taste and so much knowledge I did *not* believe: I might have taken Barnard's word though, for Barnard would not lie."]

Upon the subject of exaggerated praise I took the liberty to say, that I thought there might be very high praise given to a known character which deserved it, and therefore it would not be exaggerated. Thus, one might say of Mr. Edmund Burke, he is a very wonderful man. Johnson. "No, sir, you would not be safe, if another man had a mind perversely to contradict. He might answer, 'Where is all the wonder? Burke is, to be sure, a man of uncommon abilities; with a great quantity of matter in his mind, and a great fluency of language in his mouth. But we are not to be stunned and astonished by him.' So you see, sir, even Burke would suffer, not from any fault of his own, but from your folly[3]."

Mrs. Thrale mentioned a gentleman who had acquired a fortune of four thousand a year in trade, but was absolutely miserable because he could not talk in company, so miserable, that he was impelled to lament his situation in the street to ******, whom he hates, and who he knows despises him. "I am a most unhappy man," said he. "I am invited to *conversations*; I go to *conversations*; but, alas! I have no conversation." Johnson. "Man commonly cannot be successful in different ways. This gentleman has spent, in getting four thousand pounds a year, the time in which he might have learnt to talk; and now he cannot talk." Mr. Perkins made a shrewd and droll remark: "If he had got his four thousand a year as a mountebank, he might have learnt to talk at the same time that he was getting his fortune."

Some other gentlemen came in. The conversation concerning the person[4] whose character Dr. Johnson had treated so slightingly, as he did not know his merit, was resumed. Mrs. Thrale said, "You think so of him, sir, because he is quiet, and does not exert himself with force. You'll be saying the same thing of Mr. ***** there, who sits as quiet." This was not well bred; and Johnson did not let it pass without correction. "Nay, madam, what right have you to talk thus? Both Mr. ***** and I have reason to take it ill. *You* may talk so of Mr. *****; but why do you make *me* do it? Have I said any thing against Mr. *****? You have *set* him, that I might shoot him: but I have not shot him."

One of the gentlemen said he had seen three folio volumes of Dr. Johnson's say-

[1] Here Johnson condescended to play upon the words *Long* and *short*. But little did he know that, owing to Mr. Long's reserve in his presence, he was talking thus of a gentleman distinguished amongst his acquaintance for acuteness of wit; and to whom, I think, the French expression, "*Il petille d'esprit*," is particularly suited. He has gratified me by mentioning that he heard Dr. Johnson say, "Sir, if I were to lose Boswell it would be a limb amputated."—Boswell.

[2] William Weller Pepys, Esq., one of the masters in the high court of chancery, and well known in polite circles. My acquaintance with him is not sufficient to enable me to speak of him from my own judgment. But I know that both at Eton and Oxford he was the intimate friend of the late Sir James Macdonald, the *Marcellus* of Scotland, whose extraordinary talents, learning, and virtues will ever be remembered with admiration and regret.—Boswell. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 285.—Ed.]

[3] [This is a fresh instance (see *ante*, 29th March, 1776) of Johnson's contradicting his own assertions when another person ventured to repeat them. Boswell's supposed *folly* was saying exactly the same thing that Johnson had said to him on the 20th March, 1776. *Ante*, p. 38.—Ed.]

[4] [Mr. Dudley North.—Ed.]

ings collected by me. "I must put you right, sir," said I; "for I am very exact in authenticity. You could not see folio volumes, for I have none: you might have seen some in quarto and octavo. This is an inattention which one should guard against." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is a want of concern about veracity. He does not know that he saw *any* volumes. If he had seen them he could have remembered their size."

Mr. Thrale appeared very lethargick today. I saw him again on Monday evening, at which time he was not thought to be in immediate danger: but early in the morning of Wednesday the 4th he expired. Upon that day there was a *call* of the literary Club; but Johnson apologised for his absence by the following note:

"Wednesday, [4th April.]

"Mr. Johnson knows that Sir Joshua Reynolds and the other gentlemen will excuse his incompliance with the call, when they are told that Mr. Thrale died this morning."

Johnson was in the house, and thus mentions the event:

["Good Friday, 13th April, 1781.

"On Wednesday, 11th, was buried my dear friend Thrale, who died on Wednesday, 4th; and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning he expired. I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face that for fifteen years had never been turned upon me but with respect or benignity[1]. Farewell. May God, that delighteth in mercy, have had mercy on thee!

"I had constantly prayed for him some time before his death.

"The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself."]

ED. [At a subsequent date he added, on the same paper,

"18th September.

Pr. and Med. p. 188. "My first knowledge of Thrale was in 1765. I enjoyed his favour for almost a fourth part of my life."]

Mr. Thrale's death was a very essential loss to Johnson, who, although he did not foresee all that afterwards happened, was sufficiently convinced that the comforts which Mr. Thrale's family afforded him would now in a great measure cease. He, however, continued to show a kind attention to his widow and children as long as it was acceptable; and he took upon him, with a very earnest concern, the office of one of his executors; the importance of which seemed greater than usual to him, from his circumstances having been always such that he had scarcely any share in the real business of life. His friends of the Club were in hopes that Mr. Thrale might have made a liberal provision for him for his life, which, as Mr. Thrale left no son and a very large fortune, it would have been highly to his honour to have done and, considering Dr. Johnson's age, could not have been of long duration; but he bequeathed him only two hundred pounds, which was the legacy given to each of his executors. I could not but be somewhat diverted by hearing Johnson talk in a pompous manner of his new office, and particularly of the concerns of the brewery, which it was at last resolved should be sold. Lord Lucan tells a very good story, which, if not precisely exact, is certainly characteristical; that when the sale of Thrale's brewery was going forward, Johnson appeared bustling about, with an inkhorn and pen in his button-hole, like an exciseman: and on being asked what he really considered to be the value of the property which was to be disposed of, answered, "We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 5th April, 1781

"DEAREST MADAM,—Of your injunctions to pray for you and write to you, I hope to leave neither unobserved; and I hope to find you willing in a short time to alleviate your trouble by some other exercise of the mind. I am not without my part of the calamity. No death since that of my wife has ever oppressed me like this But let us remember that we are in the hands of Him who knows when to give and when to take away, who will look upon us with mercy through all our variations of existence, and who invites us to call on him in the day of trouble. Call upon him in this great revolution of life, and call with confidence. You will then find comfort for the past, and support for the future. He that has given you happiness in marriage, to a degree of which, without personal knowledge, I should have thought the description fabulous, can give

Letters. vol. ii. p. 191.

[1] Johnson's expressions on this occasion remind us of Isaac Walton's eulogy on Whitgift, in his Life of Hooker. "He lived to be present at the expiration of her (Queen Elizabeth's) last breath, and to behold the closing of those eyes that had long looked upon him with reverence and affection."—KEARNEY.

you another mode of happiness as a mother, and at last the happiness of losing all temporal cares in the thoughts of an eternity in heaven

"I do not exhort you to reason yourself into tranquillity. We must first pray, and then labour; first implore the blessing of God, and those means which he puts into our hands. Cultivated ground has few weeds; a mind occupied by lawful business has little room for useless regret.

"We read the will to-day; but I will not fill my first letter with any account than that, with all my zeal for your advantage, I am satisfied; and that the other executors, more used to consider property than I, commended it for wisdom and equity. Yet why should I not tell you that you have five hundred pounds for your immediate expenses, and two thousand pounds a year, with both the houses, and all the goods?

"Let us pray for one another, that the time, whether long or short, that shall yet be granted us, may be well spent; and that when this life, which at the longest is very short, shall come to an end, a better may begin which shall never end."]

Hawk. p. 551, 552. [The death of Mr. Thrale dissolved the friendship between him and Johnson; but it abated not in the latter that care for the interests of those whom his friend had left behind him, which he thought himself bound to cherish, as a living principle of gratitude. The favours he had received from Mr. Thrale were to be repaid by the exercise of kind offices towards his relict and her children, and these, circumstanced as Johnson was, could only be prudent counsels, friendly admonition to the one, and preceptive instruction to the others, both which he was ever ready to interpose. Nevertheless, it was observed by myself, and other of Johnson's friends, that, soon after the decease of Mr. Thrale, his visits to Streatham became less and less frequent, and that he studiously avoided the mention of the place or family. It seems that between him and the widow there was a formal taking of leave, for I find in his diary the following note:

"April 5th, 1783.

"I took leave of Mrs. Thrale. I was much moved. I had some expostulations with her. She said that she was likewise affected. I commended the Thrales with great good-will to God. May my petitions have been heard!"]

On Friday, April 6, he carried me to dine at a club which, at his desire, had been lately formed at the Queen's Arms in St. Paul's Churchyard. [Their dining at a club on the next day but one after the loss of such a friend as Mr. Thrale appears at first sight so unfeeling, that it is but justice to insert extracts of letters to Mrs. Thrale, in which Johnson accounts for going into company at this period.]

Ed

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, April 9th, 1781.

"DEAREST MADAM,—That you are gradually recovering your tranquillity is the effect to be humbly expected from trust in God. Do not represent life as darker than it is. Your loss has been very great, but you retain more than almost any other can hope to possess. You are high in the opinion of mankind; you have children from whom much pleasure may be expected; and that you will find many friends you have no reason to doubt. Of my friendship, be it more or less, I hope you think yourself certain, without much art or care. It will not be easy for me to repay the benefits that I have received; but I hope to be always ready at your call. Our sorrow has different effects: you are withdrawn into solitude, and I am driven into company. I am afraid of thinking what I have lost. I never had such a friend before. Let me have your prayers and those of my dear Queeney.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 195.

"The prudence and resolution of your design to return so soon to your business and your duty deserves great praise: I shall communicate it on Wednesday to the other executors."]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"DEAREST MADAM,—You will not suppose that much has happened since last night, nor indeed is this a time for talking much of loss and gain. The business of Christians is now for a few days in their own bosoms. God grant us to do it properly! I hope you gain ground on your affliction: I hope to overcome mine. You and Miss must comfort one another. May you long live happily together! I have nobody whom I expect to share my uneasiness; nor, if I could communicate it, would it be less. I give it little vent, and amuse it as I can. Let us pray for one another; and when we meet, we may try what fidelity and tenderness will do for us.

"There is no wisdom in useless and hopeless sorrow; but there is something in it so like virtue, that he who is wholly without it cannot be loved, nor will, by me at least, be thought worthy of esteem."]

He had told Mr. Hoole that he wished to have a city Club, and asked him to collect one; but, said he, "Do n't let them be *patriots*." The company were to-day very sensible, well-behaved men. I have preserved only two particulars of his conversa

tion. He said he was glad Lord George Gordon had escaped, rather than that a precedent should be established for hanging a man for *constructive treason*, which, in consistency with his true, manly, constitutional toryism, he considered would be a dangerous engine of arbitrary power. And upon its being mentioned that an opulent and very indolent Scotch nobleman, who totally resigned the management of his affairs to a man of knowledge and abilities, had claimed some merit by saying, "The next best thing to managing a man's own affairs well is being sensible of incapacity, and not attempting it, but having full confidence in one who can do it:"—JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, this is paltry. There is a middle course. Let a man give application; and depend upon it he will soon get above a despicable state of helplessness, and attain the power of acting for himself."

On Saturday, April 7, I dined with him at Mr. Hoole's with Governour Bouchier and Captain Orme, both of whom had been long in the East Indies; and, being men of good sense and observation, were very entertaining. Johnson defended the oriental regulation of different *castes* of men [1], which was objected to as totally destructive of the hopes of rising in society by personal merit. He showed that there was a *principle* in it sufficiently plausible by analogy. "We see," said he, "in metals that there are different species; and so likewise in animals, though one species may not differ very widely from another, as, in the species of dogs, the cur, the spaniel, the mastiff. The Bramins are the mastiffs of mankind."

On Thursday, April 12, I dined with him at a bishop's, where were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Berenger, and some more company. He had dined the day before at another bishop's [2]. I have unfortunately recorded none of his conversation at the bishop's where we dined together: but I have preserved his ingenious defence of his dining twice abroad in Passion-week; a laxity in which I am convinced he would not have indulged himself at the time when he wrote his solemn paper in "The Rambler" upon that awful season. It appeared to me, that by being much more in company, and enjoying more luxurious living, he had contracted a keener relish for pleasure, and was consequently less rigorous in his religious rites. This he would not acknowledge; but he reasoned with admirable sophistry as follows: "Why, sir, a bishop's calling company together in this week is, to use the vulgar phrase, not *the thing*. But you must consider laxity is a bad thing; but preciseness is also a bad thing; and your general character may be more hurt by preciseness than by dining with a bishop in Passion-week. There might be a handle for reflection. It might be said, 'He refuses to dine with a bishop in Passion-week, but was three Sundays absent from church.'" BOSWELL. "Very true, sir. But suppose a man to be uniformly of good conduct, would it not be better that he should refuse to dine with a bishop in this week, and so not encourage a bad practice by his example?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you are to consider whether you might not do more harm by lessening the influence of a bishop's character by your disapprobation in refusing him, than by going to him."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 12th April, 1781

"DEAR MADAM,—Life is full of troubles. I have just lost my dear friend Thrale. I hope he is happy; but I have had a great loss. I am otherwise pretty well. I require some care of myself, but that care is not ineffectual; and when I am out of order, I think it often my own fault.

"The spring is now making quick advances. As it is the season in which the whole world is enlivened and invigorated, I hope that both you and I shall partake of its benefits. My desire is to see Lichfield; but being left executor to my friend, I know not whether I can be spared; but I will try, for it is now long since we saw one another; and how little we can promise ourselves many more interviews, we are taught by hourly examples of mortality. Let us try to live so as that mortality may not be an evil. Write to me soon, my dearest: your letters will give me great pleasure.

"I am sorry that Mr. Porter has not had his box; but by sending it to Mr. Mathias, who very readily undertook its conveyance, I did the best I could, and perhaps before now he has it.

"Be so kind as to make my compliments to my friends. I have a great value for

[1] Rajapouts, the military caste; the Bramins, pacifick and abstemious.—KEARNEY.

[2] [The only bishops at whose houses Johnson is recorded to have dined were Shipley of St. Asaph and Porteus of Chester, afterwards of London. By a letter *post*, April, 1782, it appears that he dined two consecutive days, in April, with the Bishops of St. Asaph's and Chester. It seems so unlikely that he should, in two succeeding Aprils, have dined successively with these two bishops, that the Editor suspected that the letter placed under the year 1782, but undated in Mrs. Piozzi's volume, really belonged to 1781, and referred to the dinners mentioned in the text; but the statement in that letter, that the second of May fell on a Thursday, fixes its date to 1782. The matter is of some little importance, for we had rather be assured that Bishop Porteus were not the bishop alluded to.—ED.]

their kindness and hope to enjoy it before summer is past. Do write to me. I am, dearest love, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On Friday, April 13, being Good Friday, I went to St. Clement's church with him as usual. There I saw again his old fellow-collegian, Edwards, to whom I said, "I think, sir, Dr. Johnson and you meet only at church." "Sir," said he, "it is the best place we can meet in, except heaven, and I hope we shall meet there too." Dr. Johnson told me that there was very little communication between Edwards and him after their unexpected renewal of acquaintance. "But," said he, smiling, "he met me once and said, 'I am told you have written a very pretty book called "The Rambler."' I was unwilling that he should leave the world in total darkness, and sent him a set."

Mr. Berenger[1] visited him to-day, and was very pleasing. We talked of an evening society for conversation at a house in town, of which we were all members, but of which Johnson said, "It will never do, sir. There is nothing served about there; neither tea, nor coffee, nor lemonade, nor any thing whatever; and depend upon it, sir, a man does not love to go to a place from whence he comes out exactly as he went in." I endeavoured, for argument's sake, to maintain that men of learning and talents might have very good intellectual society, without the aid of any little gratifications of the senses. Berenger joined with Johnson, and said that without these any meeting would be dull and insipid. He would therefore have all the slight refreshments; nay, it would not be amiss to have some cold meat, and a bottle of wine upon a sideboard. "Sir," said Johnson to me, with an air of triumph, "Mr. Berenger knows the world. Every body loves to have good things furnished to them without any trouble. I told Mrs. Thrale once, that, as she did not choose to have card-tables, she should have a profusion of the best sweetmeats, and she would be sure to have company enough come to her." I agreed with my illustrious friend upon this subject; for it has pleased God to make man a composite animal, and where there is nothing to refresh the body, the mind will languish.

On Sunday, April 15, being Easter day, after solemn worship in St. Paul's church, I found him alone. Dr. Scott, of the Commons, came in. He talked of its having been said, that Addison wrote some of his best papers in "The Spectator" when warm with wine. Dr. Johnson did not seem willing to admit this. Dr. Scott, as a confirmation of it, related, that Blackstone, a sober man, composed his "Commentaries" with a bottle of port before him; and found his mind invigorated and supported in the fatigue of his great work, by a temperate use of it.

I told him, that in a company where I had lately been, a desire was expressed to know his authority for the shocking story of Addison's sending an execution into Steele's house[2]. "Sir," said he, "it is generally known; it is known to all who are acquainted with the literary history of that period: it is as well known as that he wrote 'Cato.' Mr. Thomas Sheridan once defended Addison to me, by alleging that he did it in order to cover Steele's goods from other creditors, who were going to seize them."

We talked of the difference between the mode of education at Oxford and that in those colleges where instruction is chiefly conveyed by lectures. JOHNSON. "Lectures were once useful; but now, when all can read, and books are so numerous, lectures are unnecessary. If your attention fails, and you miss a part of the lecture, it is lost; you cannot go back as you do upon a book." Dr. Scott agreed with him. "But yet," said I, "Dr. Scott, you yourself gave lectures at Oxford." He smiled. "You laughed," then said I, "at those who came to you."

Dr. Scott left us, and soon afterwards we went to dinner. Our company consisted of Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Desmoulins, Mr. Levett, Mr. Allen, the printer, (Mr. Macbean), and Mrs. Hall, sister of the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, and resembling him, as I thought, both in figure and manner. Johnson produced now, for the first time, some handsome silver salvers, which he told me he had bought fourteen years ago; so it was a great day. I was not a little amused by observing Allen perpetually struggling to talk in the manner of Johnson, like the little frog in the fable blowing himself up to resemble the stately ox.

I mentioned a kind of religious Robin-Hood society, which met every Sunday evening at Coachmakers'-hall, for free debate; and that the subject for this night was, the text which relates, with other miracles which happened at our Saviour's death "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Matt. xxvii. 52. Mrs. Hall said it was a very curi-

[1] Richard Berenger, Esq., many years gentleman of the horse to his present majesty, and authour of "The History and Art of Horsemanship," in two volumes, 4to. 1771.—MALONE [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 258, and p. 158 of this vol. Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 274, *n.*—ED.]

ous subject, and she should like to hear it discussed. JOHNSON (somewhat warmly). "One would not go to such a place to hear it,—one would not be seen in such a place—to give countenance to such a meeting." I, however, resolved that I would go. "But, sir," said she to Johnson, "I should like to hear *you* discuss it." He seemed reluctant to engage in it. She talked of the resurrection of the human race in general, and maintained that we shall be raised with the same bodies. JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, we see that it is not to be the same body; for the Scripture uses the illustration of grain sown, and we know that the grain which grows is not the same with what is sown. You cannot suppose that we shall rise with a diseased body; it is enough if there be such a sameness as to distinguish identity of person." She seemed desirous of knowing more, but he left the question in obscurity.

Of apparitions [1], he observed, "A total disbelief of them is adverse to the opinion of the existence of the soul between death and the last day; the question simply is, whether departed spirits ever have the power of making themselves perceptible to us: a man who thinks he has seen an apparition can only be convinced himself; his authority will not convince another; and his conviction, if rational, must be founded on being told something which cannot be known but by supernatural means."

He mentioned a thing as not unfrequent, of which I had never heard before,—being *called*, that is, hearing one's name pronounced by the voice of a known person at a great distance, far beyond the possibility of being reached by any sound uttered by human organs. "An acquaintance, on whose veracity I can depend, told me, that walking home one evening to Kilmarnock, he heard himself *called* from a wood, by the voice of a brother who had gone to America; and the next packet brought accounts of that brother's death." Macbean asserted that this inexplicable *calling* was a thing very well known. Dr. Johnson said, that one day at Oxford, as he was turning the key of his chamber, he heard his mother distinctly call—*Sam.* She was then at Lichfield; but nothing ensued. This phenomenon is, I think, as wonderful as any other mysterious fact, which many people are very slow to believe, or rather, indeed, reject with an obstinate contempt.

[It is probably another version of the same story to which Mrs. Piozzi alludes, when she says, "that at Brighthelmstone once, when Johnson was not present, Mr. Beauclerk asserted that he was afraid of spirits; and I, who was secretly offended at the charge, asked him, the first opportunity I could find, what ground he had ever given to the world for such a report? 'I can,' replied he, recollect nothing nearer it, than my telling Dr Lawrence many years ago, that a long time after my poor mother's death I heard her voice call *Sam.*' 'What answer did the doctor make to your story, sir?' said I. 'None in the world,' replied he; and suddenly changed the conversation. Now as Dr. Johnson had a most unshaken faith, without any mixture of credulity, this story must either have been strictly true, or his persuasion of its truth the effect of disordered spirits. I relate the anecdote precisely as he told it me; but could not prevail on him to draw out the talk into length for farther satisfaction of my curiosity."] Piozzi p. 148.

Some time after this, upon his making a remark which escaped my attention, Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Hall were both together striving to answer him. He grew angry, and called out loudly, "Nay, when you both speak at once, it is intolerable." But checking himself, and softening, he said, "This one may say, though you *are* ladies." Then he brightened into gay humour, and addressed them in the words of one of the songs in "The Beggar's Opera,"

"But two at a time there 's no mortal can bear."

"What, sir," said I, "are you going to turn Captain Macheath?" There was something as pleasantly ludicrous in this scene as can be imagined. The contrast between Macheath, Polly, and Lucy—and Dr. Samuel Johnson, blind, peevish Mrs. Williams, and lean, lank, preaching Mrs. Hall, was exquisite.

I stole away to Coachmakers'-hall, and heard the difficult text of which we had talked, discussed with great decency, and some intelligence, by several speakers.

[1] As this subject frequently recurs in these volumes, the reader may be led erroneously to suppose that Dr. Johnson was so fond of such discussions as frequently to introduce them. But the truth is, that the authour himself delighted in talking concerning ghosts and what he has frequently denominated the *mysterious;* and therefore took every opportunity of *leading* Johnson to converse on such subjects.—MALONE. The authour of this work was most undoubtedly fond of *the mysterious*, and perhaps upon some occasions may have directed the conversation to those topics, when they would not spontaneously have suggested themselves to Johnson's mind; but that *he* also had a love for speculations of that nature may be gathered from his writings throughout.—J. BOSWELL. [All this is very true, and we have seen (*ante*, vol. i. p. 437, *n.*) that Mr. Boswell had some faith in *apparitions;* but the conversation of this particular evening might have arisen amongst men not at all inclined to the mysterious, from the mention of the subject which was that night to be debated at Coachmakers'-hall.—ED.]

There was a difference of opinion as to the appearance of ghosts in modern times, though the arguments for it, supported by Mr. Addison's authority, preponderated. The immediate subject of debate was embarrassed by the *bodies* of the saints having been said to rise, and by the question what became of them afterwards :—did they return again to their graves ? or were they translated to heaven ? Only one evangelist mentions the fact[1], and the commentators whom I have looked at do not make the passage clear. There is, however, no occasion for our understanding it farther than to know that it was one of the extraordinary manifestations of divine power which accompanied the most important event that ever happened.

On Friday, April 20, I spent with him one of the happiest days that I remember to have enjoyed in the whole course of my life. Mrs. Garrick, whose grief for the loss of her husband was, I believe, as sincere as wounded affection and admiration could produce, had this day, for the first time since his death, a select party of his friends to dine with her. The company was, Miss Hannah More, who lived with her, and whom she called her chaplain ; Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Burney, Dr. Johnson, and myself. We found ourselves very elegantly entertained at her house in the Adelphi, where I have passed many a pleasing hour with him "who gladdened life." She looked well, talked of her husband with complacency, and while she cast her eyes on his portrait, which hung over the chimney-piece, said, that "death was now the most agreeable object to her." The very semblance of David Garrick was cheering. Mr. Beauclerk, with happy propriety, inscribed under that fine portrait of him, which by Lady Diana's kindness is now the property of my friend Mr. Langton, the following passage from his beloved Shakspeare :

"————————A merrier man,
Within the limit of becoming mirth,
I never spent an hour's talk withal.
His eye begets occasion for his wit ;
For every object that the one doth catch
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest;
Which his fair tongue (Conceit's expositor)
Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
That aged ears play truant at his tales,
And younger hearings are quite ravished;
So sweet and voluble is his discourse[2]."

We were all in fine spirits ; and I whispered to Mrs. Boscawen, "I believe this is as much as can be made of life." In addition to a splendid entertainment, we were regaled with Lichfield ale, which had a peculiar appropriate value. Sir Joshua, and Dr. Burney, and I, drank cordially of it to Dr. Johnson's health ; and though he would not join us, he as cordially answered, "Gentlemen, I wish you all as well as you do me."

The general effect of this day dwells upon my mind in fond remembrance ; but I do not find much conversation recorded What I have preserved shall be faithfully given.

One of the company mentioned Mr. Thomas Hollis, the strenuous whig, who used to send over Europe presents of democratical books, with their boards stamped with daggers and caps of liberty. Mrs. Carter said, "He was a bad man: he used to talk uncharitably." JOHNSON. "Poh ! poh ! madam ; who is the worse for being talked of very uncharitably ? Besides, he was a dull poor creature as ever lived: and I believe he would not have done harm to a man whom he knew to be of very opposite principles to his own. I remember once at the Society of Arts, when an advertisement was to be drawn up, he pointed me out as the man who could do it best. This, you will observe, was kindness to me. I however slipt away and escaped it."

Mrs. Carter having said of the same person, "I doubt he was an atheist :" JOHNSON. "I do n't know that. He might, perhaps, have become one, if he had had time to ripen (smiling). He might have *exuberated* into an atheist."

Sir Joshua Reynolds praised "Mudge's[3] Sermons." JOHNSON. "Mudge's Sermons are good, but not practical. He grasps more sense than he can hold ; he takes more corn than he can make into meal ; he opens a wide prospect, but it is so distant, it is indistinct. I love 'Blair's Sermons.' Though the dog is a Scotchman, and a presbyterian, and every thing he should not be, I was the first to praise them. Such was my candour" (smiling). MRS. BOSCAWEN. "Such his great merit, to get the better of all your prejudices." JOHNSON. "Why, madam, let us compound the matter ; let us ascribe it to my candour, and his merit."

In the evening we had a large company in the drawing-room ; several ladies, the Bishop of Killaloe, [Dr. Barnard] Dr. Percy, Mr. Chamberlayne of the treasury, &c. &c. Somebody said, the life of a mere literary man could not be very entertaining. JOHNSON. "But it certainly may. This is a remark which has been made, and repeated, without justice. Why should the life of a literary man be less entertaining than the life of any other man ? Are there

[1] St. Matthew, chap. xxvii. v. 52, 53.—BOSWELL

[2] [Rosaline's character of Biron. *Love's Labour Lost*, act 2, sc. 1.—ED.]

[3] [See page 284 of this volume.—ED.]

not as interesting varieties in such a life? As *a literary life* it may be very entertaining." BOSWELL. "But it must be better surely when it is diversified with a little active variety—such as having gone to Jamaica;—or—his having gone to the Hebrides." Johnson was not displeased at this

Talking of a very respectable authour, he told us a curious circumstance in his life, which was, that he had married a printer's devil. REYNOLDS. "A printer's devil, sir! why, I thought a printer's devil was a creature with a black face and in rags." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir. But I suppose he had her face washed, and put clean clothes on her. (Then looking very serious, and very earnest) And she did not disgrace him;—the woman had a bottom of good sense." The word *bottom* thus introduced was so ludicrous when contrasted with his gravity, that most of us could not forbear tittering and laughing; though I recollect that the Bishop of Killaloe kept his countenance with perfect steadiness, while Miss Hannah More slyly hid her face behind a lady's back who sat on the same settee with her. His pride could not bear that any expression of his should excite ridicule, when he did not intend it: he therefore resolved to assume and exercise despotick power, glanced sternly around, and called out in a strong tone, "Where's the merriment?" Then collecting himself, and looking awful, to make us feel how he could impose restraint, and as it were searching his mind for a still more ludicrous word, he slowly pronounced, "I say the *woman* was *fundamentally* sensible;" as if he had said, hear this now, and laugh if you dare. We all sat composed as at a funeral [1].

He and I walked away together; we stopped a little while by the rails of the Adelphi, looking on the Thames, and I said to him with some emotion, that I was now thinking of two friends we had lost, who once lived in the buildings behind us, Beauclerk and Garrick. "Ay, sir (said he, tenderly), and two such friends as cannot be supplied."

For some time after this day I did not see him very often, and of the conversation which I did enjoy, I am sorry to find I have preserved but little. I was at this time engaged in a variety of other matters which required exertion and assiduity, and necessarily occupied almost all my time.

One day having spoken very freely of those who were then in power, he said to me, "Between ourselves, sir, I do not like to give *Opposition* the satisfaction of knowing how much I disapprove of the ministry." And when I mentioned that Mr. Burke had boasted how quiet the nation was in George the Second's reign, when whigs were in power, compared with the present reign, when tories governed;—"Why, sir," said he, "you are to consider that tories having more reverence for government, will not oppose with the same violence as whigs, who, being unrestrained by that principle, will oppose by any means."

This month he lost not only Mr. Thrale, but another friend, Mr. William Strahan, junior, printer, the eldest son of his old and constant friend, printer to his majesty.

"TO MRS. STRAHAN.

"23d April, 1781.

"DEAR MADAM,—The grief which I feel for the loss of a very kind friend is sufficient to make me know how much you suffer by the death of an amiable son: a man of whom I think it may be truly said, that no one knew him who does not lament him I look upon myself as having a friend, another friend, taken from me.

"Comfort, dear madam, I would give you, if I could; but I know how little the forms of consolation can avail. Let me, however, counsel you not to waste your health in unprofitable sorrow, but go to Bath, and endeavour to prolong your own life; but when we have all done all that we can, one friend must in time lose the other. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

On Tuesday, May 8, I had the pleasure of again dining with him and Mr. Wilkes, at Mr. Dilly's. No *negotiation* was now required to bring them together; for Johnson was so well satisfied with the former interview, that he was very glad to meet Wilkes again, who was this day seated between Dr. Beattie and Dr. Johnson; (between *Truth* [2] and *Reason*, as General Paoli said, when I told him of it.) WILKES. "I have been thinking, Dr. Johnson, that there should be a bill brought into parliament that the controverted elections for Scotland should be tried in that country, at their own Abbey of Holyrood-house, and not here; for the consequence of trying them here is, that we have an inundation of Scotchmen, who come up and never go back again. Now here is Boswell, who is come upon the election for his own county, which will not last a fortnight." JOHNSON "Nay, sir, I see no reason why they should be tried at all; for, you know, one Scotch-

[1] [The Editor hopes that such a scene as this could not now occur in any respectable company ED.]

[2] [In allusion to Dr. Beattie's Essay on *Truth* —ED.]

man is as good as another." WILKES. "Pray, Boswell, how much may be got in a year by an advocate at the Scotch bar?" BOSWELL. "I believe, two thousand pounds." WILKES. "How can it be possible to spend that money in Scotland?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the money may be spent in England; but there is a harder question. If one man in Scotland gets possession of two thousand pounds, what remains for all the rest of the nation?" WILKES. "You know, in the last war, the immense booty which Thurot carried off by the complete plunder of seven Scotch isles; he re-embarked with *three and sixpence.*" Here again Johnson and Wilkes joined in extravagant sportive raillery upon the supposed poverty of Scotland, which Dr. Beattie and I did not think it worth our while to dispute.

The subject of quotation being introduced, Mr. Wilkes censured it as pedantry. JOHNSON. "No, sir, it is a good thing; there is a community of mind in it. Classical quotation is the *parole* of literary men all over the world." WILKES. "Upon the continent they all quote the vulgate Bible. Shakspeare is chiefly quoted here; and we quote also Pope, Prior, Butler, Waller, and sometimes Cowley."

We talked of letter-writing. JOHNSON. "It is now become so much the fashion to publish letters that, in order to avoid it, I put as little into mine as I can." BOSWELL. "Do what you will, sir, you cannot avoid it. Should you even write as ill as you can, your letters would be published as curiosities:

'Behold a miracle! instead of wit,
See two dull lines with Stanhope's pencil writ.'"

He gave us an entertaining account of Bet Flint, a woman of the town, who, with some eccentrick talents and much effrontery, forced herself upon his acquaintance. "Bet," said he, "wrote her own Life in verse [1], which she brought to me, wishing that I would furnish her with a preface to it (laughing). I used to say of her, that she was generally slut and drunkard;—occasionally whore and thief. She had, however, genteel lodgings, a spinnet on which she played, and a boy that walked before her chair. Poor Bet was taken up on a charge of stealing a counterpane, and tried at the Old Bailey. Chief Justice [Willes,] who loved a wench, summed up favourably, and she was acquitted [2]. After which, Bet said, with a gay and satisfied air, 'Now that the counterpane is *my own*, I shall make a petticoat of it.'"

Talking of oratory, Mr. Wilkes described it as accompanied with all the charms of poetical expression. JOHNSON "No, sir; oratory is the power of beating down your adversary's arguments, and putting better in their place." WILKES. "But this does not move the passions." JOHNSON. "He must be a weak man who is to be so moved." WILKES (naming a celebrated orator). "Amidst all the brilliancy of——'s [3] imagination, and the exuberance of his wit, there is a strange want of *taste*. It was observed of Apelles's Venus [4], that her flesh seemed as if she had been nourished by roses: his oratory would sometimes make one suspect that he eats potatoes and drinks whiskey."

Mr. Wilkes observed, how tenacious we are of forms in this country, and gave as an instance, the vote of the house of commons for remitting money to pay the army in America in Portugal pieces, when, in reality, the remittance is made not in Portugal money, but in our specie. JOHNSON. "Is there not a law, sir, against exporting the current coin of the realm?" WILKES. "Yes, sir; but might not the house of commons, in case of real evident necessity, order our own current coin to be sent into our own colonies?" Here Johnson, with that quickness of recollection which distinguished him so eminently, gave the Mid-

[1] Johnson, whose memory was wonderfully retentive, remembered the first four lines of this curious production, which have been communicated o me by a young lady of his acquaintance:

"When first I drew my vital breath,
A little minikin I came upon earth;
And then I came from a dark abode,
Into this gay and gaudy world."—BOSWELL

[2] The account which Johnson had received on this occasion was not quite accurate. Bet was tried at the Old Bailey in September, 1758, not by the chief justice [Willes.—ED.] here alluded to (who however tried another cause on the same day), but before Sir William Moreton, recorder; and she was acquitted, not in consequence of any *favourable summing up* of the judge, but because the prosecutrix, Mary Walthow, could not prove that the goods charged to have been stolen (a counterpane, a silver spoon, two napkins, &c.) were her property. Bet does not appear to have lived at that time in a very *genteel* style; for she paid for her ready-furnished *room* in Meard's-court, Dean-street, Soho, from which these articles were alleged to be stolen, only *five shillings* a week. Mr. James Boswell took the trouble to examine the sessions paper to ascertain these particulars.—MALONE.

[3] [Mr. Burke's.—ED.]

[4] [Mr. Wilkes mistook the objection of Euphranor to the Theseus of Parrhasius for a description of the Venus of Appelles. Vide *Plutarch.* "Bellone an pace clariores Athenienses."—KEARNEY. ["Euphranor, comparing his own representation of Theseus with that by Parrhasius, said that the latter looked as if the hero had been fed on *roses*, but that his showed that he had lived on *beef*." *Plut. Xyl* v. ii. p 346.—ED.]

llesex patriot an admirable retort upon his own ground. "Sure, sir, *you* don't think a *resolution of the house of commons* equal to *the law of the land*." WILKES (at once perceiving the application). "God forbid, sir."—To hear what had been treated with such violence in "The False Alarm" now turned into pleasant repartee, was extremely agreeable. Johnson went on:—"Locke observes well, that a prohibition to export the current coin is impolitick; for when the balance of trade happens to be against a state, the current coin *must* be exported."

Mr. Beauclerk's great library was this season sold in London by auction. Mr. Wilkes said, he wondered to find in it such a numerous collection of sermons: seeming to think it strange that a gentleman of Mr. Beauclerk's character in the gay world should have chosen to have many compositions of that kind. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you are to consider, that sermons make a considerable branch of English literature; so that a library must be very imperfect if it has not a numerous collection of sermons[1]: and in all collections, sir, the desire of augmenting them grows stronger in proportion to the advance in acquisition; as motion is accelerated by the continuance of the *impetus*. Besides, sir," looking at Mr. Wilkes, with a placid but significant smile, "a man may collect sermons with intention of making himself better by them. I hope Mr. Beauclerk intended that some time or other that should be the case with him."

Mr. Wilkes said to me, loud enough for Dr. Johnson to hear, "Dr. Johnson should make me a present of his 'Lives of the Poets,' as I am a poor patriot, who cannot afford to buy them." Johnson seemed to take no notice of this hint; but in a little while he called to Mr. Dilly, "Pray, sir, be so good as to send a set of my Lives to Mr. Wilkes, with my compliments." This was accord-

[1] Mr. Wilkes probably did not know that there is in an English sermon the most comprehensive and lively account of that entertaining faculty for which he himself was so much admired. It is in Dr. Barrow's first volume, and fourteenth sermon, "Against foolish Talking and Jesting." My old acquaintance, the late Corbyn Morris, in his ingenious "Essay on Wit, Humour, and Ridicule," calls it "a *profuse* description of wit:" but I do not see how it could be curtailed, without leaving out some good circumstance of discrimination. As it is not generally known, and may perhaps dispose some to read sermons, from which they may receive real advantage, while looking only for entertainment, I shall here subjoin it.

"But first (says the learned preacher) it may be demanded, what the thing we speak of is? Or what this facetiousness (or *wit*, as he calls it before) doth import? To which questions I might reply, as Democritus did to him that asked the definition of a man, 'Tis that which we all see and know.' Any one better apprehends what it is by acquaintance that I can inform him by description. It is, indeed, a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale; sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound: sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of humourous expression: sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude: sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection: sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense: sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture, passeth for it: sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being: sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange: sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose. Often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable and inexplicable; being answerable to the numberless rovings of fancy and windings of language. It is, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way (such as reason teacheth and proveth things by), which, by a pretty surprising uncouthness in conceit of expression, doth affect and amuse the fancy, stirring in it some wonder, and breeding some delight thereto. It raiseth admiration, as signifying a nimble sagacity of apprehension, a special felicity of invention, a vivacity of spirit, and reach of wit more than vulgar; it seeming to argue a rare quickness of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable skill, that he can dexterously accommodate them to the purpose before him: together with a lively briskness of humour, not apt to damp those sportful flashes of imagination. (Whence in Aristotle such persons are termed ευτραπελοι, dexterous men, and ευτροποι, men of facile or versatile manners, who can easily turn themselves to all things, or turn all things to themselves.) It also procureth delight, by gratifying curiosity with its rareness, as semblance of difficulty: (as monsters, not for their beauty, but their rarity; as juggling tricks, not for their use, but their abstruseness, are beheld with pleasure:) by diverting the mind from its road of serious thoughts; by instilling gayety and airiness of spirit; by provoking to such dispositions of spirit in way of emulation or complaisance; and by seasoning matters, otherwise distasteful or insipid, with an unusual and thence grateful tang."—BOSWELL.

ngly done; and Mr. Wilkes paid Dr. Johnson a visit, was courteously received, and sat with him a long time.

The company gradually dropped away. Mr. Dilly himself was called down stairs upon business; I left the room for some time; when I returned, I was struck with observing Dr. Samuel Johnson and John Wilkes, Esq. literally *tête-à-tête;* for they were reclined upon their chairs, with their heads leaning almost close to each other, and talking earnestly, in a kind of confidential whisper, of the personal quarrel between George the Second and the King of Prussia. Such a scene of perfectly easy sociality between two such opponents in the war of political controversy, as that which I now beheld, would have been an excellent subject for a picture. It presented to my mind the happy days which are foretold in the Scripture, when the lion shall lie down with the kid [1].

After this day there was another pretty long interval, during which Dr. Johnson and I did not meet. When I mentioned it to him with regret, he was pleased to say, "Then, sir, let us live double."

About this time it was much the fashion for several ladies to have evening assemblies, where the fair sex might participate in conversation with literary and ingenious men, animated by a desire to please. These societies were denominated *Blue-stocking Clubs;* the origin of which title being little known, it may be worth while to relate it. One of the most eminent members of those societies, when they first commenced, was Mr. Stillingfleet [2], whose dress was remarkably grave, and in particular it was observed that he wore blue stockings. Such was the excellence of his conversation, that his absence was felt as so great a loss, that it used to be said, "We can do nothing without the *blue stockings;*" and thus by degrees the title was established. Miss Hannah More has admirably described a *Blue-stocking Club* in her "*Bas Bleu,*" a poem in which many of the persons who were most conspicuous there are mentioned.

Johnson was prevailed with to come sometimes into these circles, and did not think himself too grave even for the lively Miss Monckton [3] (now Countess of Corke), who used to have the finest *bit of blue* at the house of her mother, Lady Galway. Her vivacity enchanted the sage, and they used to talk together with all imaginable ease. A singular instance happened one evening, when she insisted that some of Sterne's writings were very pathetick. Johnson bluntly denied it. "I am sure," said she, "they have affected *me.*" "Why," said Johnson, smiling, and rolling himself about, "that is because, dearest, you 're a dunce." When she some time afterwards mentioned this to him, he said, with equal truth and politeness, "Madam, if I had thought so, I certainly should not have said it."

Another evening Johnson's kind indulgence towards me had a pretty difficult trial. I had dined at the Duke of Montrose's with a very agreeable party; and his grace, according to his usual custom, had circulated the bottle very freely. Lord Graham and I went together to Miss Monckton's, where I certainly was in extraordinary spirits, and above all fear or awe. In the midst of a great number of persons of the first rank, amongst whom I recollect, with confusion, a noble lady of the most stately decorum, I placed myself next to Johnson, and thinking myself now fully his match, talked to him in a loud and boisterous manner, desirous to let the company know how I could contend with *Ajax.* I particularly remember pressing him upon the value of the pleasures of the imagination, and, as an illustration of my argument, asking him, "What, sir, supposing I were to fancy that the —— (naming the most charming duchess in his majesty's dominions) were in love with me, should I not be very happy?" My friend with much address evaded my interrogatories, and kept me as quiet as possible; but it may easily be conceived how he must have felt [4]. However, when

[1] When I mentioned this to the Bishop of Killaloe, [Dr. Barnard,] "With the *goat,*" said his lordship. Such, however, was the engaging politeness and pleasantry of Mr. Wilkes, and such the social good humour of the bishop, that when they dined together at Mr. Dilly's, where I also was, they were mutually agreeable.—BOSWELL.

[2] Mr. Benjamin Stillingfleet, authour of tracts relating to natural history, &c.—BOSWELL.

[3] [See *ante,* p. 231, *n.*—ED.]

[4] Next day I endeavoured to give what had happened the most ingenious turn I could by the following verses:

TO THE HONOURABLE MISS MONCKTON

Not that with th' excellent Montrose
I had the happiness to dine;
Not that I late from table rose,
From Graham's wit, from generous wine.

It was not these alone which led
On sacred manners to encroach;
And made me feel what most I dread,
Johnson's just frown, and self-reproach,

But when I enter'd, not abash'd,
From your bright eyes were shot such rays
At once intoxication flash'd,
And all my frame was in a blaze

But not a brilliant blaze I own,
Of the dull smoke I 'm yet ashamed;
I was a dreary ruin grown,
And not enlighten'd, though inflamed.

Victim at once to wine and love,
I hope, Maria, you'll forgive;
While I invoke the powers above,
That henceforth I may wiser live.

The lady was generously forgiving, returned me an obliging answer, and I thus obtained an *act of oblivion,* and took care never to offend again.—BOSWELL.

a few days afterwards I waited upon him and made an apology, he behaved with the most friendly gentleness.

While I remained in London this year, Johnson and I dined together at several places. I recollect a placid day at Dr. Butter's [1], who had now removed from Derby to Lower Grosvenor-street, London; but of his conversation on that and other occasions during this period I neglected to keep any regular record, and shall therefore insert here some miscellaneous articles which I find in my Johnsonian notes.

His disorderly habits, when "making provision for the day that was passing over him," appear from the following anecdote, communicated to me by Mr. John Nichols: "In the year 1763 a young bookseller, who was an apprentice to Mr. Whiston, waited on him with a subscription to his 'Shakspeare;' and observing that the Doctor made no entry in any book of the subscriber's name, ventured diffidently to ask whether he would please to have the gentleman's address, that it might be properly inserted in the printed list of subscribers. '*I shall print no list of subscribers*,' said Johnson, with great abruptness: but almost immediately recollecting himself, added, very complacently, 'Sir, I have two very cogent reasons for not printing any list of subscribers: one, that I have lost all the names; the other, that I have spent all the money.'"

Johnson could not brook appearing to be worsted in argument, even when he had taken the wrong side, to show the force and dexterity of his talents. When, therefore, he perceived that his opponent gained ground, he had recourse to some sudden mode of robust sophistry. Once when I was pressing upon him with visible advantage, he stopped me thus: "My dear Boswell, let's have no more of this; you'll make nothing of it. I'd rather have you whistle a Scotch tune."

Care, however, must be taken to distinguish between Johnson when he "talked for victory," and Johnson when he had no desire but to inform and illustrate. "One of Johnson's principal talents," says an eminent friend of his [2], "was shown in maintaining the wrong side of an argument, and in a splendid perversion of the truth. If you could contrive to have his fair opinion on a subject, and without any bias from personal prejudice, or from a wish to be victorious in argument, it was wisdom itself, not only convincing, but overpowering."

He had, however, all his life habituated himself to consider conversation as a trial of intellectual vigour and skill: and to this, I think, we may venture to ascribe that unexampled richness and brilliancy which appeared in his own. As a proof at once of his eagerness for colloquial distinction, and his high notion of this eminent friend, he once addressed him thus: "———, we now have been several hours together, and you have said but one thing for which I envied you [3]."

He disliked much all speculative despondering considerations, which tended to discourage men from diligence and exertion. He was in this like Dr. Shaw, the great traveller, who, Mr. Daines Barrington told me, used to say, "I hate a *cui bono* man." Upon being asked by a friend what he should think of a man who was apt to say *non est tanti*; "That he's a stupid fellow, sir," answered Johnson. "What would these *tanti* men be doing the while?" When I, in a low-spirited fit, was talking to him with indifference of the pursuits which generally engage us in a course of action, and inquiring a *reason* for taking so much trouble; "Sir," said he, in an animated tone, "it is driving on the system of life."

He told me that he was glad that I had, by General Oglethorp's means, become acquainted with Dr. Shebbeare. Indeed that gentleman, whatever objections were made to him, had knowledge and abilities much above the class of ordinary writers, and deserves to be remembered as a respectable name in literature, were it only for his admirable "Letters on the English Nation," under the name of "Battista Angeloni, a Jesuit."

Johnson and Shebbeare [4] were frequently named together, as having in former reigns had no predilection for the family of Hanover. The authour [5] of the celebrated "Heroick Epistle to Sir William Chambers" introduces them in one line [6], in a list of those "who tasted the sweets of his present majesty's reign." Such was Johnson's candid relish of the merit of that satire, that he allowed Dr. Goldsmith, as he told me, to read it to him from beginning to end, and did not refuse his praise to its execution.

Goldsmith could sometimes take adventurous liberties with him, and escape unpun-

[1] [See *ante*, p. 117.—Ed.]

[2] The late Right Hon. William Gerrard Hamilton.—Malone.

[3] [It seems a strange way of expressing a *high notion* of a man's powers in conversation to say, that "in several hours he had said but one good thing."—Ed.]

[4] I recollect a ludicrous paragraph in the news papers, that the king had pensioned both a *He*-bear and a *She*-bear.—Boswell. [See *ante* vol. i. p. 252.—Ed.]

[5] [There can be no doubt that it was the joint production of Mason and Walpole; Mason supplying the poetry, and Walpole the points.—Ed.]

[6] [See *ante*, p. 178, *n*.—Ed.]

ished. Beauclerk told me, that when Goldsmith talked of a project for having a third theatre in London solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authours from the supposed tyranny of managers, Johnson treated it slightingly, upon which Goldsmith said, "Ay, ay, this may be nothing to you, who can now shelter yourself behind the corner of a pension;" and Johnson bore this with good-humour.

Johnson praised the Earl of Carlisle's poems [1], which his lordship had published with his name, as not disdaining to be a candidate for literary fame. My friend was of opinion that when a man of rank appeared in that character, he deserved to have his merit handsomely allowed [2]. In this I think he was more liberal than Mr. William Whitehead, in his "Elegy to Lord Villiers," in which, under the pretext of "superiour toils, demanding all their care," he discovers a jealousy of the great paying their court to the Muses:

"——————— to the chosen few
Who dare excel, thy fost'ring aid afford;
Their arts, their magick powers, with honours due
Exalt;—but be thyself what they record."

Johnson had called twice on [Dr. Barnard] the Bishop of Killaloe before his lordship set out for Ireland, having missed him the first time. He said, "It would have hung heavy on my heart if I had not seen him. No man ever paid more attention to another than he has done to me; and I have neglected him, not wilfully, but from being otherwise occupied. Always, sir, set a high value on spontaneous kindness. He whose inclination prompts him to cultivate your friendship of his own accord, will love you more than one whom you have been at pains to attach to you."

This gave me very great pleasure, for there had been once a pretty smart altercation [3] between Dr. Barnard and him, upon a question, whether a man could improve himself after the age of forty-five; when Johnson in a hasty humour expressed himself in a manner not quite civil. Dr. Barnard made it the subject of a copy of pleasant verses, in which he supposed himself to learn different perfections from different men. The concluding stanza is a delicate irony [4] on Dr Johnson.

I know not whether Johnson ever saw the poem, but I had occasion to find that, as Dr. Barnard and he knew each other better, their mutual regard increased [5].

[This, as Miss Reynolds remarks, was one of the few occasions in which Johnson appeared anxious to make atonement for conversational rudeness, and she adds the following account of it: Ed

"I shall never forget with what regret he spoke of the rude reply he made to Dr. Barnard, on his saying Reyn. Recol.

[1] [Frederic, fifth Earl of Carlisle, born in 1748; died in 1825.—Ed.]

[2] Men of rank and fortune, however, should be pretty well assured of having a real claim to the approbation of the publick, as writers, before they venture to stand forth. Dryden, in his preface to "All for Love," thus expresses himself:—"Men of pleasant conversation (at least esteemed so) and endued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out by a smattering of Latin, are ambitious to distinguish themselves from the herd of gentlemen by their poetry:

'Rarus enim fermè sensus communis in illa Fortuna.'——

And is not this a wretched affectation, not to be contented with what fortune has done for them, and sit down quietly with their estates, but they must call their wits in question, and needlessly expose their nakedness to publick view? Not considering that they are not to expect the same approbation from sober men which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle: if a little glittering in discourse has passed them on us for witty men, where was the necessity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an estate, but yet is in possession of it—would he bring it out of his own accord to be tried at Westminster? We who write, if we want the talents, yet have the excuse that we do it for a poor subsistence; but what can be urged in their defence, who, not having the vocation of poverty to scribble, out of mere wantonness take pains to make themselves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right where he said, 'That no man is satisfied with his own condition.' A poet is not pleased because he is not rich; and the rich are discontented because the poets will not admit them of their number."—Boswell. [Mr. Boswell seems to insinuate that Lord Carlisle had no claim to the approbation of the public as a writer, and that he exposed himself to ridicule by this publication; and Lord Byron, in one of those wayward fits which too often distorted the views of that extraordinary person, recorded the same opinion with the bitterness and exaggeration of a professed satirist. In these judgments the Editor cannot concur. Lord Carlisle was not, indeed, a *great poet*, but he was superior to many whom Mr. Boswell was ready enough to admit into the "sacred choir." His verses have good sense, sweetness, and elegance. It should be added, in justice both to Lord Carlisle and Lord Byron, that the latter very much regretted the flippant and unjust sarcasms he had uttered against his noble friend and relation.—Ed.]

[3] [This incident took place about 1776.—Ed.]

[4] [The Editor does not think the last stanza very happy, as it seems to mix up awkwardly enough truth and irony.—Ed.]

[5] [This account of Dr. Johnson's rudeness to Dr. Barnard, Mr. Boswell had thrown into a note, and had quoted only the last stanza of the dean's poetical retaliation; but as an interesting incident in the history of Johnson's social life, the Editor has removed it to the text, and has added the whole anecdote from Miss Reynolds's *Recollections*.—Ed.]

that men never improved after the age of forty-five. 'That 's not true, sir,' said Johnson. 'You, who perhaps are forty-eight, may still improve, if you will try: I wish you would set about it; and I am afraid,' he added, 'there is great room for it;' and this was said in rather a large party of ladies and gentlemen at dinner. Soon after the ladies withdrew from the table, Dr. Johnson followed them, and, sitting down by the lady of the house [1], he said, 'I am very sorry for having spoken so rudely to the dean.' 'You very well may, sir.' Yes,' he said, 'it was highly improper to speak in that style to a minister of the gospel, and I am the more hurt on reflecting with what mild dignity he received it.' When the dean came up into the drawing-room, Dr. Johnson immediately rose from his seat, and made him sit on the sofa by him, and with such a beseeching look for pardon, and with such fond gestures—literally smoothing down his arms and his knees—tokens of penitence, which were so graciously received by the dean as to make Dr. Johnson very happy, and not a little added to the esteem and respect he had previously entertained for his character.

"The next morning the dean called on Sir Joshua Reynolds with the following verses:—

"I lately thought no man alive
Could e'er improve past forty-five,
And ventured to assert it.
The observation was not new,
But seem'd to me so just and true
That none could controvert it.

'No, sir,' says Johnson, 'tis not so;
'Tis your mistake, and I can show
An instance, if you doubt it.
You, who perhaps are forty-eight,
May still improve, 'tis not too late:
I wish you'd set about it.'

Encouraged thus to mend my faults,
I turn'd his counsel in my thoughts
Which way I could apply it;
Genius I knew was past my reach,
For who can learn what none can teach?
And wit—I could not buy it.

Then come, my friends, and try your skill;
You may improve me if you will,
(My books are at a distance);
With you I'll live and learn, and then
Instead of books I shall read men;
So lend me your assistance.

Dear knight of Plympton [2], teach me how
To suffer with unclouded brow,
And smile serene as thine,
The jest uncouth and truth severe;
Like thee to turn my deafest ear,
And calmly drink my wine.

Thou say'st not only skill is gain'd,
But genius, too, may be attain'd,
By studious invitation;
Thy temper mild, thy genius fine,
I'll study till I make them mine
By constant meditation.

Thy art of pleasing teach me, Garrick,
Thou who reversest odes Pindarick [3]
A second time read o'er;
Oh! could we read thee backwards too,
Last thirty years thou should'st review,
And charm us thirty more.

If I have thoughts and can't express 'em,
Gibbon shall teach me how to dress 'em
In terms select and terse;
Jones teach me modesty and Greek;
Smith, how to think; Burke, how to speak
And Beauclerk to converse.

Let Johnson teach me how to place
In fairest light each borrow'd grace:
From him I'll learn to write
Copy his free and easy style,
And from the roughness of his file
Grow, like himself, polite."]

Johnson told me that he was once much pleased to find that a carpenter who lived near him was very ready to show him some things in his business which he wished to see: "It was paying," said he, "respect to literature."

I asked him if he was not dissatisfied with having so small a share of wealth, and none of those distinctions in the state which are the objects of ambition. He had only a pension of three hundred a year. Why was he not in such circumstances as to keep his coach? Why had he not some considerable office? JOHNSON. "Sir, I have never complained of the world; nor do I think that I have reason to complain. It is rather to be wondered at that I have so much. My pension is more out of the usual course of things than any instance that I have known. Here, sir, was a man avowedly no friend to government at the time, who got a pension without asking for it. I never courted the great; they sent for me; but I think they now give me up. They are satisfied: they have seen enough of me." Upon my observing that I could not believe this, for they must certainly be highly pleased by his conversation; conscious of his own superiority, he answered, "No, sir; great lords and great ladies don't love to have their mouths stopped." This was very expressive of the effect which the force of his understanding and brilliancy of his fancy could not but produce; and, to be sure, they must have found themselves strangely diminished in his company. When I warmly declared how happy I was

[1] [Probably Miss Reynolds herself.—ED.]

[2] [Sir Joshua Reynolds was born at Plympton in Devon.—ED.]

[3] [A humorous attempt of Garrick's to read one of Cumberland's odes backwards. See *ante* p. 65.—ED.]

at all times to hear him,—"Yes, sir," said he; "but if you were lord chancellor it would not be so: you would then consider your own dignity."

There was much truth and knowledge of human nature in this remark. But certainly one should think that in whatever elevated state of life a man who *knew* the value of the conversation of Johnson might be placed, though he might prudently avoid a situation in which he might appear lessened by comparison, yet he would frequently gratify himself in private with the participation of the rich intellectual entertainment which Johnson could furnish. Strange, however, is it, to consider how few of the great sought his society; so that if one were disposed to take occasion for satire on that account, very conspicuous objects present themselves. His noble friend, Lord Elibank, well observed, that if a great man procured an interview with Johnson, and did not wish to see him more, it showed a mere idle curiosity, and a wretched want of relish for extraordinary powers of mind. Mrs. Thrale justly and wittily accounted for such conduct by saying, that Johnson's conversation was by much too strong for a person accustomed to obsequiousness and flattery; it was *mustard in a young child's mouth!*

One day, when I told him that I was a zealous tory, but not enough "according to knowledge," and should be obliged to him for "a reason," he was so candid, and expressed himself so well, that I begged of him to repeat what he had said, and I wrote down as follows:

OF TORY AND WHIG.

"A wise tory and a wise whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the same, though their modes of thinking are different. A high tory makes government unintelligible; it is lost in the clouds. A violent whig makes it impracticable: he is for allowing so much liberty to every man, that there is not power enough to govern any man. The prejudice of the tory is for establishment, the prejudice of the whig is for innovation. A tory does not wish to give more real power to government; but that government should have more reverence. Then they differ as to the church. The tory is not for giving more legal power to the clergy, but wishes they should have a considerable influence, founded on the opinion of mankind: the whig is for limiting and watching them with a narrow jealousy."

"TO MR. PERKINS.

"2d June, 1781.

"SIR,—However often I have seen you, I have hitherto forgotten the note, but I have now sent it, with my good wishes for the prosperity of you and your partner[1], of whom, from our short conversation, I could not judge otherwise than favourably. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On Saturday, June 2, I set out for Scotland, and had promised to pay a visit, in my way, as I sometimes did, at Southill, in Bedfordshire, at the hospitable mansion of Squire Dilly, the elder brother of my worthy friends, the booksellers, in the Poultry. Dr. Johnson agreed to be of the party this year, with Mr. Charles Dilly and me, and to go and see Lord Bute's seat at Luton Hoe. He talked little to us in the carriage, being chiefly occupied in reading Dr. Watson's[2] second volume of "Chemical Essays," which he liked very well, and his own "Prince of Abyssinia," on which he seemed to be intensely fixed; having told us, that he had not looked at it since it was first finished. I happened to take it out of my pocket this day, and he seized upon it with avidity. He pointed out to me the following remarkable passage: "By what means (said the prince) are the Europeans thus powerful? or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiaticks and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies[3] in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carried them back would bring us thither." "They are more powerful, sir, than we (answered Imlac), because they are wiser. Knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being." He said, "This, sir, no man can explain otherwise."

We stopped at Welwin, where I wished much to see, in company with Johnson, the residence of the authour of "Night Thoughts," which was then possessed by

[1] Mr. Barclay, a descendant of Robert Barclay, of Ury, the celebrated apologist of the people called Quakers, and remarkable for maintaining the principles of his venerable progenitor, with as much of the elegance of modern manners as is consistent with primitive simplicity.—BOSWELL.

[2] Now Bishop of Llandaff, one of the *poorest* bishopricks in this kingdom. His lordship has written with much zeal to show the propriety of *equalizing* the revenues of bishops. He has informed us that he has burnt all his chemical papers. The friends of our excellent constitution now assailed on every side by innovators and levellers, would have less regretted the suppression of some of his lordship's other writings.—BOSWELL.

[3] The Phœnicians and Carthaginians *did* plant colonies in Europe.—KEARNEY.

his son, Mr Young. Here some address was requisite, for I was not acquainted with Mr. Young, and had I proposed to Dr. Johnson that we should send to him, he would have checked my wish, and perhaps been offended. I therefore concerted with Mr. Dilly, that I should steal away from Dr. Johnson and him, and try what reception I could procure from Mr. Young: if unfavourable, nothing was to be said; but if agreeable, I should return and notify it to them. I hastened to Mr. Young's, found he was at home, sent in word that a gentleman desired to wait upon him, and was shown into a parlour, where he and a young lady, his daughter, were sitting. He appeared to be a plain, civil, country gentleman; and when I begged pardon for presuming to trouble him, but that I wished much to see his place, if he would give me leave, he behaved very courteously, and answered, "By all means, sir. We are just going to drink tea; will you sit down?" I thanked him, but said that Dr Johnson had come with me from London, and I must return to the inn to drink tea with him: that my name was Boswell; I had travelled with him in the Hebrides. "Sir," said he, "I should think it a great honour to see Dr. Johnson here. Will you allow me to send for him?" Availing myself of this opening, I said that "I would go myself and bring him when he had drunk tea; he knew nothing of my calling here." Having been thus successful, I hastened back to the inn, and informed Dr. Johnson that "Mr. Young, son of Dr. Young, the authour of 'Night Thoughts,' whom I had just left, desired to have the honour of seeing him at the house where his father lived." Dr. Johnson luckily made no inquiry how this invitation had arisen, but agreed to go; and when we entered Mr. Young's parlour, he addressed him with a very polite bow, "Sir, I had a curiosity to come and see this place. I had the honour to know that great man your father." We went into the garden, where we found a gravel walk, on each side of which was a row of trees, planted by Dr. Young, which formed a handsome Gothick arch. Dr. Johnson called it a fine grove. I beheld it with reverence.

We sat some time in the summer-house, on the outside wall of which was inscribed, "*Ambulantes in horto audiebant vocem Dei*[1];" and in the reference to a brook by which it is situated, "*Vivendi rectè qui prorogat horam*[2]," &c. I said to Mr. Young, that I had been told his father was cheerful. "Sir," said he, "he was too well bred a man not to be cheerful in company; but he was gloomy when alone He never was cheerful after my mother's death, and he had met with many disappointments." Dr. Johnson observed to me afterwards, "That this was no favourable account of Dr. Young; for it is not becoming in a man to have so little acquiescence in the ways of Providence, as to be gloomy because he has not obtained as much preferment as he expected; nor to continue gloomy for the loss of his wife. Grief has its time." The last part of this censure was theoretically made. Practically, we know that grief for the loss of a wife may be continued very long, in proportion as affection has been sincere. No man knew this better than Dr. Johnson.

We went into the church, and looked at the monument erected by Mr. Young to his father. Mr. Young mentioned an anecdote, that his father had received several thousand pounds of subscription-money for his "Universal Passion," but had lost it in the South Sea[3]. Dr. Johnson thought this must be a mistake, for he had never seen a subscription-book.

Upon the road we talked of the uncertainty of profit with which authours and booksellers engage in the publication of literary works. JOHNSON. "My judgment I have found is no certain rule as to the sale of a book." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, have you been much plagued with authours sending you their works to revise?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; I have been thought a sour surly fellow." BOSWELL. "Very lucky for you, sir,—in that respect." I must however observe, that, notwithstanding what he now said, which he no doubt imagined at the time to be the fact, there was, perhaps, no man who more frequently yielded to the solicitations even of very obscure authours to read their manuscripts, or more liberally assisted them with advice and correction.

He found himself very happy at Squire Dilly's, where there is always abundance of excellent fare, and hearty welcome.

On Sunday, June 3, we all went to Southill church, which is very near to Mr. Dilly's house. It being the first Sunday in the month, the holy sacrament was administered, and I staid to partake of it. When I came afterwards into Dr. Johnson's room, he said, "You did right to stay and receive the communion: I had not thought of it." This seemed to imply that he did not choose to approach the altar without a

[1] ["Walking in the garden they heard the voice of God." *Genesis*, iii. 8.—ED.]

[2] ["——The man who has it in his power
To practise virtue, and protracts the hour,
Waits till the river pass away: but, lo!
Ceaseless it flows and will for ever flow."
Francis. Horace Epist. lib. i. ep 2, v. 41.—ED.]

[3] This assertion is disproved by a comparison of dates. The first four satires of Young were published in 1725. The South Sea scheme (which appears to be meant) was in 1720.—MALONE.

previous preparation, as to which good men entertain different opinions, some holding that it is irreverent to partake of that ordinance without considerable premeditation; others, that whoever is a sincere Christian, and in a proper frame of mind to discharge any other ritual duty of our religion, may, without scruple, discharge this most solemn one. A middle notion I believe to be the just one, which is, that communicants need not think a long train of preparatory forms indispensably necessary; but neither should they rashly and lightly venture upon so awful and mysterious an institution. Christians must judge, each for himself, what degree of retirement and self-examination is necessary upon each occasion.

Being in a frame of mind which I hope, for the felicity of human nature, many experience,—in fine weather,—at the country-house of a friend,—consoled and elevated by pious exercises,—I expressed myself with an unrestrained fervour to my "Guide, Philosopher, and Friend." "My dear sir, I would fain be a good man; and I am very good now. I fear God, and honour the king; I wish to do no ill, and to be benevolent to all mankind." He looked at me with a benignant indulgence; but took occasion to give me wise and salutary caution. "Do not, sir, accustom yourself to trust to *impressions*. There is a middle state of mind between conviction and hypocrisy, of which many are unconscious. By trusting to impressions, a man may gradually come to yield to them, and at length be subject to them, so as not to be a free agent, or what is the same thing in effect, to *suppose* that he is not a free agent. A man who is in that state should not be suffered to live; if he declares he cannot help acting in a particular way, and is irresistibly impelled, there can be no confidence in him, no more than in a tiger. But, sir, no man believes himself to be impelled irresistibly; we know that he who says he believes it, lies. Favourable impressions at particular moments, as to the state of our souls, may be deceitful and dangerous. In general no man can be sure of his acceptance with God; some, indeed, may have had it revealed to them. St. Paul, who wrought miracles, may have had a miracle wrought on himself, and may have obtained supernatural assurance of pardon, and mercy, and beatitude; yet St. Paul, though he expresses strong hope, also expresses fear, lest having preached to others, he himself should be a castaway."

The opinion of a learned bishop of our acquaintance, as to there being merit in religious faith, being mentioned:—JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, the most licentious man, were hell open before him, would not take the most beautiful strumpet to his arms. We must, as the apostle says, live by faith, not by sight[1]."

I talked to him of original sin[2], in consequence of the fall of man, and of the atonement made by our Saviour. After some conversation, which he desired me to remember, he, at my request, dictated to me as follows:

"With respect to original sin, the inquiry is not necessary; for whatever is the cause of human corruption, men are evidently and confessedly so corrupt, that all the laws of heaven and earth are insufficient to restrain them from crimes.

"Whatever difficulty there may be in the conception of vicarious punishments, it is an opinion which has had possession of mankind in all ages. There is no nation that has not used the practice of sacrifices Whoever, therefore, denies the propriety of vicarious punishments, holds an opinion which the sentiments and practice of mankind have contradicted from the beginning of the world. The great sacrifice for the sins of mankind was offered at the death of the Messiah, who is called in Scripture 'The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.' To judge of the reasonableness of the scheme of redemption it

[1] [There seems much obscurity here. If the bishop used the word *merit* in a popular sense, and meant only to say, colloquially, that "a religious faith was *meritorious* or *praiseworthy*," the observation was hardly worth recording; yet, it is not, on the other hand, likely that he meant, speaking theologically, to attribute *merit towards salvation* to any act or operation of the human mind, "for that were" (as the Homily forbids) "to count ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue which is within us." But on either interpretation it seems hard to discover the connexion or meaning of the reply, attributed to Dr. Johnson. The bishop's opinion is evidently very imperfectly stated, and there must have been some connecting links in the chain of Johnson's reasoning which Mr. Boswell has lost. The passage—not quite accurately quoted by Dr. Johnson—is in St. Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, v. 7. "We *walk* by faith, and not by sight."—ED.]

[2] Dr. Ogden, in his second sermon "On the Articles of the Christian Faith," with admirable acuteness thus addresses the opposers of that doctrine, which accounts for the confusion, sin, and misery, which we find in this life: "It would be severe in God, you think, to *degrade* us to such a sad state as this, for the offence of our first parents: but you can allow him to *place* us in it without any inducement. Are our calamities lessened for not being ascribed to Adam? If your condition be unhappy, is it not still unhappy, whatever was the occasion? with the aggravation of this reflection, that if it was as good as it was at first designed, there seems to be somewhat the less reason to look for its amendment."—BOSWELL.

must be considered as necessary to the government of the universe that God should make known his perpetual and irreconcileable detestation of moral evil. He might indeed punish, and punish only the offenders; but as the end of punishment is not revenge of crimes but propagation of virtue, it was more becoming the divine clemency to find another manner of proceeding, less destructive to man, and at least equally powerful to promote goodness. The end of punishment is to reclaim and warn. *That* punishment will both reclaim and warn, which shows evidently such abhorrence of sin in God, as may deter us from it, or strike us with dread of vengeance when we have committed it. This is effected by vicarious punishment. Nothing could more testify the opposition between the nature of God and moral evil, or more amply display his justice, to men and angels, to all orders and successions of beings, than that it was necessary for the highest and purest nature, even for Divinity itself, to pacify the demands of vengeance by a painful death; of which the natural effect will be, that when justice is appeased, there is a proper place for the exercise of mercy; and that such propitiation shall supply, in some degree, the imperfections of our obedience and the inefficacy of our repentance: for obedience and repentance, such as we can perform, are still necessary. Our Saviour has told us, that he did not come to destroy the law but to fulfil: to fulfil the typical law, by the performance of what those types had foreshown, and the moral law, by precepts of greater purity and higher exultation."

Here he said "God bless you with it." I acknowledged myself much obliged to him; but I begged that he would go on as to the propitiation being the chief object of our most holy faith. He then dictated this one other paragraph.

"The peculiar doctrine of christianity is, that of an universal sacrifice and perpetual propitiation[1]. Other prophets only proclaimed the will and the threatenings of God. Christ satisfied his justice."

The Reverend Mr. Palmer[2], fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, dined with us. He expressed a wish that a better provision were made for parish-clerks. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, a parish-clerk should be a man who is able to make a will or write a letter for any body in the parish."

I mentioned Lord Monboddo's notion[3] that the ancient Egyptians, with all their learning and all their arts, were not only black, but woolly-haired. Mr. Palmer asked how did it appear upon examining the mummies? Dr. Johnson approved of this test.

Although upon most occasions I never heard a more strenuous advocate for the advantages of wealth than Dr. Johnson, he this day, I know not from what caprice, took the other side. "I have not observed," said he, "that men of very large fortunes enjoy any thing extraordinary that makes happiness. What has the Duke of Bedford? What has the Duke of Devonshire? The only great instance that I have ever known of the enjoyment of wealth was that of Jamaica Dawkins, who going to visit Palmyra, and hearing that the way was infested by robbers, hired a troop of Turkish horse to guard him[4]."

Dr. Gibbons[5] the dissenting minister, being mentioned, he said, "I took to Dr. Gibbons." And addressing himself to Mr. Charles Dilly, added, "I shall be glad to see him. Tell him, if he 'll call on me, and dawdle over a dish of tea in an afternoon, I shall take it kind."

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[1] [See *ante*, p. 127, *n.* This passage proves the justice of the observation which the Editor made in that note as to Johnson's opinion on this important point.—ED.]

[2] This unfortunate person, whose full name was Thomas Fysche Palmer, afterwards went to Dundee, in Scotland, where he officiated as minister to a congregation of the sect who call themselves Unitarians, from a notion that they distinctively worship one God, because they *deny* the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity. They do not advert that the great body of the christian church in maintaining that mystery maintain also the *unity* of the Godhead: "the Trinity in Unity!—three persons and one God." The church humbly adores the Divinity as exhibited in the holy scriptures. The unitarian sect vainly presumes to comprehend and define the Almighty. Mr. Palmer having heated his mind with political speculations, became so much dissatisfied with our excellent constitution as to compose, publish, and circulate writings, which were found to be so seditious and dangerous, that upon being found guilty by a jury, the court of justiciary in Scotland sentenced him to transportation for fourteen years. A loud clamour against this sentence was made by some members of both houses of parliament; but both houses approved of it by a great majority, and he was conveyed to the settlement for convicts in New South Wales.—BOSWELL. Mr. T. F. Palmer was of Queen's College in Cambridge, where he took the degree of master of arts in 1772, and that of S. T. B. in 1781. He died on his return from Botany Bay in the year 1803 —MALONE.

[3] Taken from Herodotus.—BOSWELL.

[4] [Henry Dawkins, Esq., the companion of Wood and Bouverie in their travels, and the patron of the *Athenian* Stuart.—ED.]

[5] [Thomas Gibbons, "a Calvinist" (says the *Biog. Dict.*) "of the old stamp, and a man of great piety and primitive manners." He wrote a Life of Dr. Watts, and assisted Dr. Johnson with some materials for the *Life* of Watts in the *English Poets*. He died by a stroke of apoplexy in 1785, ætat. sixty-five.—ED.]

The Reverend Mr. Smith, vicar of Southill, a very respectable man, with a very agreeable family, sent an invitation to us to drink tea. I remarked Dr. Johnson's very respectful politeness. Though always fond of changing the scene, he said, "We must have Mr. Dilly's leave. We cannot go from your house, sir, without your permission." We all went, and were well satisfied with our visit. I, however, remember nothing particular, except a nice distinction which Dr. Johnson made with respect to the power of memory, maintaining that forgetfulness was a man's own fault. "To remember and to recollect," said he, "are different things. A man has not the power to recollect what is not in his mind, but when a thing is in his mind he may remember it[1]."

The remark was occasioned by my leaning back on a chair, which a little before I had perceived to be broken, and pleading forgetfulness as an excuse. "Sir," said he, "its being broken was certainly in your mind."

When I observed that a housebreaker was in general very timorous: JOHNSON. "No wonder, sir; he is afraid of being shot getting *into* a house, or hanged when he has got *out* of it."

He told us, that he had in one day written six sheets of a translation from the French; adding, "I should be glad to see it now. I wish that I had copies of all the pamphlets written against me, as it is said Pope had. Had I known that I should make so much noise in the world, I should have been at pains to collect them. I believe there is hardly a day in which there is not something about me in the newspapers."

On Monday, June 4, we all went to Luton-Hoe, to see Lord Bute's magnificent seat, for which I had obtained a ticket. As we entered the park, I talked in a high style of my old friendship with Lord Mountstuart, and said, "I shall probably be much at this place." The sage, aware of human vicissitudes, gently checked me: "Don't you be too sure of that[2]." He made two or three peculiar observations; as, when shown the botanical garden, "Is not *every* garden a botanical garden?" When told that there was a shrubbery to the extent of several miles; "That is making a very foolish use of the ground; a little of it is very well." When it was proposed that we should walk on the pleasure-ground; "Don't let us fatigue ourselves. Why should we walk there? Here's a fine tree, let's get to the top of it." But upon the whole, he was very much pleased. He said, "This is one of the places I do not regret having come to see. It is a very stately place, indeed; in the house magnificence is not sacrificed to convenience, nor convenience to magnificence. The library is very splendid; the dignity of the rooms is very great; and the quantity of pictures is beyond expectation, beyond hope."

It happened without any previous concert that we visited the seat of Lord Bute upon the king's birthday; we dined and drank his majesty's health at an inn in the village of Luton.

In the evening I put him in mind of his promise to favour me with a copy of his celebrated Letter to the Earl of Chesterfield, and he was at last pleased to comply with this earnest request, by dictating it to me from his memory; for he believed that he himself had no copy. There was an animated glow in his countenance while he thus recalled his high-minded indignation.

He laughed heartily at a ludicrous action in the court of session, in which I was counsel. The society of procurators, or attornies, entitled to practise in the inferior courts at Edinburgh, had obtained a royal charter, in which they had taken care to have their ancient designation of *Procurators* changed into that of *Solicitors*, from a notion, as they supposed, that it was more *genteel;* and this new title they displayed by a public advertisement for a general meeting at their hall.

It has been said that the Scottish nation is not distinguished for humour; and, indeed, what happened on this occasion may, in some degree, justify the remark; for although this society had contrived to make themselves a very prominent object for the ridicule of such as might stoop to it, the only joke to which it gave rise was the following paragraph, sent to the newspaper called "The Caledonian Mercury."

"A correspondent informs us, the Worshipful Society of *Chaldeans, Cadies,* or *Running-Stationers* of this city are re-

[1] [Mr. Boswell's note must have been imperfect. Dr. Johnson certainly never talked such nonsense as is here attributed to him—a man can no more *remember* "what is *not* on his mind" than he can *recollect* it, and "when a thing *is* in his mind" he can just as well *recollect* as remember it. In his Dictionary, Johnson defines "*remember*, to bear in mind, to recollect, to call to mind." This would seem to imply that he considered the words as nearly synonymous; but in his definition of "*recollect*, to recover memory, to gather what is scattered," he makes the true distinction. When the words are to be contradistinguished, it may be said that *remembrance* is *spontaneous*, and *recollection* an *effort*.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 31.
"Dulcis inexpertis potentis cultura amici,
Expertus metuit."—*Hor. Ep.* xviii. lib. i. v. 36.—ED.]

solved, in imitation, and encouraged by the singular success of their brethren, of an *equally respectable* Society, to apply for a Charter of their Privileges, particularly of the sole privilege of PROCURING, in the most extensive sense of the word, exclusive of chairmen, porters, penny-post men, and other *inferior* ranks; their brethren, the R—y—l S—l——rs, *alias* P—c——rs, *before the* INFERIOUR Courts of this City, always excepted.

"Should the Worshipful Society be successful, they are farther resolved not to be *puffed up* thereby, but to demean themselves with more equanimity and decency than their *r-y-l, learned*, and *very modest* brethren above mentioned have done, upon their late dignification and exaltation."

A majority of the members of the society prosecuted Mr. Robertson, the publisher of the paper, for damages; and the first judgment of the whole court very wisely dismissed the action: *Solventur risu tabulæ, tu missus abibis.* But a new trial or review was granted upon a petition, according to the forms in Scotland. This petition I was engaged to answer, and Dr. Johnson, with great alacrity, furnished me this evening with [an argument, which will be found in the Appendix.]

I am ashamed to mention, that the court, by a plurality of voices, without having a single additional circumstance before them, reversed their own judgment, made a serious matter of this dull and foolish joke, and adjudged Mr. Robertson to pay to the society five pounds (sterling money) and costs of suit. The decision will seem strange to English lawyers.

On Tuesday, June 5, Johnson was to return to London. He was very pleasant at breakfast; I mentioned a friend of mine having resolved never to marry a pretty woman. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is a very foolish resolution to resolve not to marry a pretty woman Beauty is of itself very estimable. No, sir, I would prefer a pretty woman, unless there are objections to her. A pretty woman may be foolish; a pretty woman may be wicked; a pretty woman may not like me. But there is no such danger in marrying a pretty woman as is apprehended; she will not be persecuted if she does not invite persecution. A pretty woman, if she has a mind to be wicked, can find a readier way than another; and that is all."

I accompanied him in Mr. Dilly's chaise to Shefford, where, talking of Lord Bute's never going to Scotland, he said, "As an Englishman, I should wish all the Scotch gentlemen should be educated in England; Scotland would become a province; they would spend all their rents in England." This is a subject of much consequence, and much delicacy. The advantage of an English education is unquestionably very great to Scotch gentlemen of talents and ambition; and regular visits to Scotland, and perhaps other means, might be effectually used to prevent them from being totally estranged from their native country, any more than a Cumberland or Northumberland gentleman, who has been educated in the south of England. I own, indeed, that it is no small misfortune for Scotch gentlemen, who have neither talents nor ambition, to be educated in England, where they may be perhaps distinguished only by a nickname, lavish their fortune in giving expensive entertainments to those who laugh at them, and saunter about as mere idle, insignificant hangers-on even upon the foolish great; when, if they had been judiciously brought up at home, they might have been comfortable and creditable members of society.

At Shefford I had another affectionate parting from my revered friend, who was taken up by the Bedford coach and carried to the metropolis. I went with Messieurs Dilly to see some friends at Bedford; dined with the officers of the militia of the county, and next day proceeded on my journey.

My correspondence with Dr. Johnson during the rest of this year was, I know not why, very scanty, and all on my side. I wrote him one letter to introduce Mr. Sinclair (now Sir John), the member for Caithness [1], to his acquaintance; and informed him in another that my wife had again been affected with alarming symptoms of illness [2]. [But his letters to other correspondents, and particularly to Mrs. Thrale, carry on the story of his life.] ED.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"London, 9th June, 1781.

"DEAR MADAM,—I hope the summer makes you better. My disorders, which had come upon me again, have again given way to medicine; and I am a better sleeper than I have lately been. Pearson MSS.

"The death of dear Mr. Thrale has made my attendance upon his home necessary; but we have sold the trade, which we did not know how to manage, and have sold it for an hundred and thirty thousand pounds.

"My Lives are at last published, and you will receive them this week by the car-

[1] [The Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, bart.; a voluminous writer on agriculture and statistics.—ED.]

[2] [This passage is transposed from the date (January, 1782) under which it stands in the original edition, to this, its more proper place.—ED.]

ner I have some hopes of coming this summer amongst you for a short time. I shall be loath to miss you two years together. But in the mean time let me know how you do. I am, dear madam, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"Bolt-court, 16th June, 1781.

"DEAR SIR,—How welcome your account of yourself and your invitation to your new house was to me, I need not tell you, who consider our friendship not only as formed by choice, but as matured by time. We have been now long enough acquainted to have many images in common, and therefore to have a source of conversation which neither the learning nor the wit of a new companion can supply.

"My Lives are now published; and if you will tell me whither I shall send them, that they may come to you, I will take care that you shall not be without them.

"You will perhaps be glad to hear that Mrs. Thrale is disencumbered of her brewhouse; and that it seemed to the purchaser so far from an evil, that he was content to give for it an hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds. Is the nation ruined?

"Please to make my respectful compliments to Lady Rothes, and keep me in the memory of all the little dear family, particularly Mrs. Jane. I am, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson's charity to the poor was uniform and extensive, both from inclination and principle. He not only bestowed liberally out of his own purse, but what is more difficult as well as rare, would beg from others, when he had proper objects in view. This he did judiciously as well as humanely. Mr. Philip Metcalfe tells me, that when he has asked him for some money for persons in distress, and Mr. Metcalfe has offered what Johnson thought too much, he insisted on taking less, saying, "No, no, sir; we must not *pamper* them [1]."

Piozzi, p. 80. [With advising others to be charitable, however, Dr. Johnson did not content himself. He gave away all he had, and all he ever had gotten, except the two thousand pounds he left behind; and the very small portion of his income which he spent on himself, with all our calculation, we never could make more than seventy or at most fourscore pounds a year, and he pretended to allow himself a hundred. He had numberless dependants out of doors as well as in, "who, as he expressed it, did not like to see him latterly unless he brought them money." For those people he used frequently to raise contributions on his richer friends; "and this," says he, "is one of the thousand reasons which ought to restrain a man from drony solitude and useless retirement."]

I am indebted to Mr. Malone, one of Sir Joshua Reynolds's executors, for the following note, which was found among his papers after his death, and which, we may presume, his unaffected modesty prevented him from communicating to me with the other letters from Dr. Johnson with which he was pleased to furnish me. However slight in itself, as it does honour to that illustrious painter and most amiable man, I am happy to introduce it.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"23d June, 1781.

"DEAR SIR,—It was not before yesterday that I received your splendid benefaction. To a hand so liberal in distributing, I hope nobody will envy the power of acquiring. I am, dear sir, your obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[The following letters were written at this time by Johnson to Miss Reynolds, the latter on receiving from her a copy of her "Essay on Taste," privately printed, but never published.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"25th June, 1781.

"DEAR MADAM,—You may give the book [2] to Mrs. Horneck [3], and I will give you another for yourself. Reyn. MSS.

"I am afraid there is no hope of Mrs. Thrale's custom for your pictures; but, if you please, I will mention it. She cannot make a pension out of her jointure [4].

"I will bring the papers myself. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON"

"TO MISS REYNOLDS [5].

"Bolt-court, 28th June, 1781

DEAREST MADAM,—There is in these [*pages, or remarks,*] such depth of pene-

[1] [See *ante*, v. 98.—ED.]

[2] [Probably the *Beauties of Johnson*, published about this period: see *ante*, vol. i. p. 87.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 186.—ED.]

[4] [Miss Reynolds, it seems, wished to dispose of her collection, and thought that Mrs. Thrale might purchase and pay for it by an annuity.—ED.]

[5] The lady to whom this letter was addressed, and for whom Dr. Johnson had a high regard, died in Westminster, at the age of eighty, Nov. 1, 1807.—MALONE. [One Sunday evening, at the time he was first declining, Miss Reynolds sent to make inquiries. His answer was, "Tell her that I *cannot* be well, for she does *not* come to see me."—*Hawk. Mem.* vol. ii p. 149.—ED.]

tration, such nicety of observation, as Locke or Pascal might be proud of. This I desire you to believe is my real opinion.

"However, it cannot be published in its present state. Many of your notions seem not to be very clear in your own mind; many are not sufficiently developed and expanded for the common reader: it wants every where to be made smoother and plainer.

"You may, by revisal and correction, make it a very elegant and a very curious work. I am, my dearest dear, your affectionate and obedient servant,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."]

"TO THOMAS ASTLE, ESQ.

"17th July, 1781.

"SIR,—I am ashamed that you have been forced to call so often for your books, but it has been by no fault on either side. They have never been out of my hands, nor have I ever been at home without seeing you; for to see a man so skilful in the antiquities of my country is an opportunity of improvement not willingly to be missed.

"Your notes on Alfred[1] appear to me very judicious and accurate, but they are too few. Many things familiar to you are unknown to me, and to most others; and you must not think too favourably of your readers: by supposing them knowing, you will leave them ignorant. Measure of land, and value of money, it is of great importance to state with care. Had the Saxons any gold coin?

"I have much curiosity after the manners and transactions of the middle ages, but have wanted either diligence or opportunity, or both. You, sir, have great opportunities, and I wish you both diligence and success. I am, sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The following curious anecdote I insert in Dr. Burney's own words. "Dr. Burney related to Dr. Johnson the partiality which his writings had excited in a friend of Dr. Burney's, the late Mr. Bewley[2], well known in Norfolk by the name of the *Philosopher of Massingham;* who, from the Ramblers and plan of his Dictionary, and long before the authour's fame was established by the Dictionary itself, or any other work, had conceived such a reverence for him, that he earnestly begged Dr. Burney to give him the cover of the first letter he had received from him, as a relick of so estimable a writer. This was in 1755. In 1760, when Dr. Burney visited Dr. Johnson at the Temple in London, where he had then chambers, he happened to arrive there before he was up; and being shown into the room where he was to breakfast, finding himself alone, he examined the contents of the apartment, to try whether he could, undiscovered, steal any thing to send to his friend Bewley, as another relick of the admirable Dr. Johnson. But finding nothing better to his purpose, he cut some bristles off his hearth-broom, and enclosed them in a letter to his country enthusiast, who received them with due reverence. The Doctor was so sensible of the honour done to him by a man of genius and science, to whom he was an utter stranger, that he said to Dr. Burney, 'Sir, there is no man possessed of the smallest portion of modesty, but must be flattered with the admiration of such a man. I'll give him a set of my Lives, if he will do me the honour to accept of them.' In this he kept his word; and Dr. Burney had not only the pleasure of gratifying his friend with a present more worthy of his acceptance than the segment from the hearth-broom, but soon after introducing him to Dr. Johnson himself in Bolt-court, with whom he had the satisfaction of conversing a considerable time, not a fortnight before his death; which happened in St. Martin's-street, during his visit to Dr. Burney, in the house where the great Sir Isaac Newton had lived and died before[3]."

In one of his little memorandum-books is the following minute:

"August 9, 3 P. M. ætat. 72, in the summer-house at Streatham.

"After innumerable resolutions formed and neglected, I have retired hither, to plan a life of greater diligence, in hope that I may yet be useful, and be daily better pre-

[1] The will of King Alfred alluded to in this letter, from the original Saxon, in the library of Mr. Astle, has been printed at the expense of the University of Oxford.—BOSWELL.

[2] [He was a "*Monthly Reviewer*," and died in 1783. If the story of "the bristles of the hearth-broom," or any thing like it, be true, Mr. Bewley might better have been called an *idiot* than an *enthusiast;* but the editor takes the liberty of disbelieving the anecdote altogether. That Mr. Bewley might have wished and asked for Dr. Johnson's *autograph* is natural enough; but that, *after a lapse of five years*, he should have been satisfied with receiving instead of an autograph a few bristles of a broom is to absurd; and that Dr. Burney should not have mentioned so strange a story to Dr. Johnson till after the further lapse of *twenty-five years* is quite incredible.—ED.]

[3] [This house (No. 36) is now occupied as a parish school-house, but the upper apartments have been but little altered since the days of their illustrious owner. There were lately published proposals for erecting on the site a monument to the memory of Sir Isaac; the *design* of which was a globe of brick and stones, covered with plaster of Paris, and marked with geographical and astronomical lines, and having a hollow centre large enough for a public lecture-room.—ED.]

pared to appear before my Creator and my Judge, from whose infinite mercy I humbly call for assistance and support.

"My purpose is,

"To pass eight hours every day in some serious employment.

"Having prayed, I purpose to employ the next six weeks upon the Italian language for my settled study."

How venerably pious does he appear in these moments of solitude! and how spirited are his resolutions for the improvement of his mind, even in elegant literature, at a very advanced period of life, and when afflicted with many complaints!

In autumn he went to Oxford, Birmingham, Lichfield, and Ashbourne, for which very good reasons might be given in the conjectural[1] yet positive manner of writers, who are proud to account for every event which they relate. He himself, however, says, "The motives of my journey I hardly know: I omitted it last year, and am not willing to miss it again." But some good considerations arise, amongst which is the kindly recollection of Mr. Hector, surgeon, of Birmingham. "Hector is likewise an old friend, the only companion of my childhood that passed through the school with me. We have always loved one another: perhaps we may be made better by some serious conversation; of which, however, I have no distinct hope."

Prayers. & Med. p. 198.

He says, too, "At Lichfield, my native place, I hope to show a good example by frequent attendance on publick worship."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"Oxford, 17th October, 1781.

"On Monday evening arrived at the Angel inn at Oxford Mr. Johnson and Mr. Barber, without any sinister accident.

"I am here; but why am I here? on my way to Lichfield, where I believe Mrs. Aston will be glad to see me. We have known each other long, and, by consequence, are both old; and she is paralytick; and if I do not see her soon, I may see her no more in this world. To make a visit on such considerations is to go on a melancholy errand. But such is the course of life.

"This place is very empty, but there are more here whom I know than I could have expected. Young Burke[2] has just been with me, and I have dined to-day with Dr Adams, who seems fond of me."

"Lichfield, 20th October, 1781.

"I wrote from Oxford, where I staid two days. On Thursday I went to Birmingham, and was told by Hector that I should not be well so soon as I expected; but that well I should be. Mrs. Careless took me under her care, and told me *when I had tea enough*. On Friday I came hither, and have escaped the post-chaises[3] all the way. Every body here is as kind as I expected; I think Lucy is kinder than ever."

"27th October, 1781.

"Poor Lucy's illness has left her very deaf, and, I think, very inarticulate. I can scarcely make her understand me, and she can hardly make me understand her. So here are merry doings. But she seems to like me better than she did. She eats very little, but does not fall away.

"Mrs. Cobb and Peter Garrick are as you left them. Garrick's legatees at this place are very angry that they receive nothing. Things are not quite right, though we are so far from London[4]."

"Ashbourne, 10th November, 1781.

"Yesterday I came to Ashbourne, and last night I had very little rest. Dr. Taylor lives on milk, and grows every day better, and is not wholly without hope. Every body inquires after you and Queeney; but whatever [Miss] Burney may think of the celerity of fame, the name of Evelina had never been heard at Lichfield till I brought it. I am afraid my dear townsmen will be mentioned in future days as the last part of this nation that was civilized[5]. But the days of darkness are soon to be at an end The reading society ordered it to be procured this week."

"Ashbourne, 24th November, 1781.

"I shall leave this place about the beginning of next week, and shall leave every place as fast as I decently can, till I get back to you, whose kindness is one of my great comforts. I am not well, but have a mind

[1] [This observation, just enough in general, is here peculiarly ill-placed; for, besides the motives for the journey which Mr. Boswell has quoted from the Prayers and Meditations, we shall see, by a subsequent letter, that Mrs. Thrale's kindness had forced him to undertake this little tour for the benefit of his health and spirits.—ED.]

[2] [Richard, the only son of Edmund Burke, at this period at Oxford. He died in 1794, æt. 36. His afflicted father has immortalised him in many pathetic passages of his later works, and particularly in his celebrated "Letter to a Noble Lord."—ED.]

[3] [He means *escaped* the *expense* of post-chaises by happening to find places in stage-coaches.—ED.]

[4] [Dr. Johnson always controverted the common-place observation of the superior purity and happiness of *country* life.—ED.]

[5] [See *ante*, pp. 43 and 44, where, in a better humour, he describes his townsmen as the most civilized people in England.—ED.]

every now and then to think myself better, and I now hope to be better under your care."

"Lichfield, 3d December, 1781.

"I am now come back to Lichfield, where I do not intend to stay long enough to receive another letter. I have little to do here but to take leave of Mrs. Aston. I hope not the last leave. But christians may with more confidence than Sophonisba

'Avremo tosto lungo lungo spazio
Per stare assieme, et sarà forfe eterno.'

"My time passed heavily at Ashbourne; yet I could not easily get away; though Taylor, I sincerely think, was glad to see me go. I have now learned the inconvenience of a winter campaign; but I hope home will make amends for all my foolish sufferings."

"Birmingham, 8th December, 1781.

"I am come to this place on my way to London and to Streatham. I hope to be in London on Tuesday or Wednesday, and at Streatham on Thursday, by your kind conveyance. I shall have nothing to relate either wonderful or delightful. But remember that you sent me away, and turned me out into the world, and you must take the chance of finding me better or worse. This you may know at present, that my affection for you is not diminished; and my expectation from you is increased. Do not neglect me nor relinquish me. Nobody will ever love you better or honour you more than, madam, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

In 1782 his complaints increased, and the history of his life this year is little more than a mournful recital of the variations of his illness, in the midst of which, however, it will appear from his letters that the powers of his mind were in no degree impaired.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"5th January, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I sit down to answer your letter on the same day in which I received it, and am pleased that my first letter of the year is to you. No man ought to be at ease while he knows himself in the wrong; and I have not satisfied myself with my long silence. The letter relating to Mr. Sinclair however, was, I believe, never brought.

"My health has been tottering this last year; and I can give no very laudable account of my time. I am always hoping to do better than I have ever hitherto done.

"My journey to Ashbourne and Staffordshire was not pleasant; for what enjoyment has a sick man visiting the sick? Shall we ever have another frolick like our journey to the Hebrides?

"I hope that dear Mrs. Boswell will surmount her complaints: in losing her you will lose your anchor, and be tossed, without stability, by the waves of life[1]. I wish both you and her very many years, and very happy.

"For some months past I have been so withdrawn from the world, that I can send you nothing particular. All your friends, however, are well, and will be glad of your return to London. I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

At a time when he was less able than he had once been to sustain a shock, he was suddenly deprived of Mr. Levett, which event he thus communicated to Dr. Lawrence.

"17th January, 1782.

"SIR,—Our old friend, Mr. Levett, who was last night eminently cheerful, died this morning. The man who lay in the same room, hearing an uncommon noise, got up and tried to make him speak, but without effect. He then called Mr. Holder, the apothecary, who, though when he came he thought him dead, opened a vein, but could draw no blood. So has ended the long life of a very useful and very blameless man. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In one of his memorandum-books in my possession is the following entry:

"January 20, Sunday, Robert Levett was buried in the churchyard of Bridewell, between one and two in the afternoon. He died on Thursday, 17, about seven in the morning, by an instantaneous death. He was an old and faithful friend: I have known him from about 46[2]. *Commendavi*[3]. May God have mercy on him! May he have mercy on me!"

Such was Johnson's affectionate regard for Levett[4], that he honoured his memory with the following pathetick verses:

"Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blast or slow decline
Our social comforts drop away.

"Well try'd through many a varying year,
See Levett to the grave descend;
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

[1] The truth of this has been proved by sad experience.—BOSWELL. Mrs. Boswell died June 4, 1789.—MALONE.

[2] [No doubt the *year* 1746, and not the *age* of either party.—ED.]

[3] [He, by this word, means that he had in prayer *recommended* his departed friend to the mercy of God. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 99.—ED.]

[4] See an account of him in "The Gentleman's Magazine," February, 1785.—BOSWELL.

"Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind;
Nor, letter'd arrogance [1], deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting Nature call'd for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
The power of art without the show.

"In misery's darkest caverns known,
His ready help was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retired to die [2].

"No summons mock'd by chill delay,
No petty gains disdain'd by pride:
The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supplied.

"His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the eternal Master found
His single talent [3] well employ'd.

"The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

"Then, with no throbs of fiery pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way [4]."

"TO MRS. STRAHAN.
"4th February, 1782.

"DEAR MADAM,—Mrs. Williams showed me your kind letter. This little habitation is now but a melancholy place, clouded with the gloom of disease and death. Of the four inmates, one has been suddenly snatched away; two are oppressed by very afflictive and dangerous illness; and I tried yesterday to gain some relief by a third bleeding from a disorder which has for some time distressed me, and I think myself to-day much better.

"I am glad, dear madam, to hear that you are so far recovered as to go to Bath. Let me once more entreat you to stay till your health is not only obtained, but confirmed. Your fortune is such as that no moderate expense deserves your care; and you have a husband who, I believe, does not regard it. Stay, therefore, till you are quite well. I am, for my part, very much deserted; but complaint is useless. I hope God will bless you, and I desire you to form the same wish for me. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO EDMUND MALONE, ESQ.
"27th Feburary, 1782.

"SIR,—I have for many weeks been so much out of order, that I have gone out only in a coach to Mrs. Thrale's, where I can use all the freedom that sickness requires. Do not, therefore, take it amiss, that I am not with you and Dr. Farmer. I hope hereafter to see you often. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO EDMUND MALONE, ESQ.
"2d March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I hope I grow better, and shall soon be able to enjoy the kindness of my friends. I think this wild adherence to Chatterton [5] more unaccountable than the obstinate defence of Ossian. In Ossian there is a national pride, which may be forgiven, though it cannot be applauded. In Chatterton there is nothing but the resolution to say again what has once been said. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] In both editions of Sir John Hawkin's "Life of Dr. Johnson," "letter'd *ignorance*," is printed.—BOSWELL.

[2] Johnson repeated this line to me thus:

"And labour steals an hour to die."

But he afterwards altered it to the present reading. -BOSWELL.

[3] [Is there a pun hidden under this allusion to the parable in Matthew xxv. 15?—ED.]

[4] [Here, by an error of date, followed some observations on a curious passage in one of Johnson's diaries, which is removed to its proper place, March 1782. *vost*, p. 316.—ED.]

[5] This note was in answer to one which accompanied one of the earliest pamphlets on the subject of Chatterton's forgery, entitled "Cursory Observations on the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley," &c. Mr. Thomas Warton's very able "Inquiry" appeared about three months afterwards; and Mr. Tyrwhitt's admirable "Vindication of his Appendix," in the summer of the same year, left the believers in this daring imposture nothing but "the resolution to say again what had been said before." Daring, however, as this fiction was, and wild as was the adherence to Chatterton, both were greatly exceeded in 1795 and the following year, by a still more audacious imposture, and the pertinacity of one of its adherents, who has immortalized his name by publishing a bulky volume, of which the direct and manifest object was, to prove the authenticity of certain papers attributed to Shakspeare, after the fabricator of the spurious trash had publickly acknowledged the imposture.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone alludes to the forgery, by Mr. William Henry Ireland, of the Shakspearian papers which were exhibited with a ridiculous mixture of pomp and mystery at his father's house in Norfolk-street. It seems scarcely conceivable how such palpable impositions could have deceived the most ignorant, and yet there were numerous dupes in the critical and literary circles of the day. Mr. W. H. Ireland has since published a full and minute confession of the whole progress of his forgery; but with a curious obstinacy, he, in this work, vehemently accuses of blindness, ignorance, and bad faith all those who detected what he confesses to have been an imposture, and is equally lavish in praise of the discernment and judgment of those whom he proves to have been dupes. —ED.]

These short letters show the regard which Dr. Johnson entertained for Mr. Malone, who the more he is known is the more highly valued. It is much to be regretted that Johnson was prevented from sharing the elegant hospitality of that gentleman's table, at which he would in every respect have been fully gratified. Mr. Malone, who has so ably succeeded him as an editor of Shakspeare, has, in his Preface, done great and just honour to Johnson's memory.

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 2d March, 1782.

"DEAR MADAM,—I went away from Lichfield ill, and have had a troublesome time with my breath. For some weeks I have been disordered by a cold, of which I could not get the violence abated till I had been let blood three times. I have not, however, been so bad but that I could have written, and am sorry that I neglected it.

"My dwelling is but melancholy. Both Williams, and Desmoulins, and myself, are very sickly; Frank is not well; and poor Levett died in his bed the other day by a sudden stroke. I suppose not one minute passed between health and death. So uncertain are human things.

"Such is the appearance of the world about me; I hope your scenes are more cheerful. But whatever befalls us, though it is wise to be serious, it is useless and foolish, and perhaps sinful, to be gloomy. Let us, therefore, keep ourselves as easy as we can; though the loss of friends will be felt, and poor Levett had been a faithful adherent for thirty years.

"Forgive me, my dear love, the omission of writing; I hope to mend that and my other faults. Let me have your prayers.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb, and Miss Adey, and Mr. Pearson, and the whole company of my friends. I am, my dear, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 19th March, 1782.

"DEAR MADAM,—My last was but a dull letter, and I know not that this will be much more cheerful: I am, however, willing to write, because you are desirous to hear from me.

"My disorder has now begun its ninth week, for it is not yet over. I was last Thursday blooded for the fourth time, and have since found myself much relieved, but I am very tender and easily hurt; so that since we parted I have had but little comfort. But I hope that the spring will recover me, and that in the summer I shall see Lichfield again, for I will not delay my visit another year to the end of autumn.

"I have, by advertising, found poor Mr. Levett's brothers, in Yorkshire, who will take the little he has left: it is but little, yet it will be welcome, for I believe they are of very low condition

"To be sick, and to see nothing but sickness and death, is but a gloomy state: but I hope better times, even in this world, will come, and whatever this world may withhold or give, we shall be happy in a better state. Pray for me, my dear Lucy.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb, and Miss Adey, and my old friend, Hetty Bailey, and to all the Lichfield ladies. I am, dear madam, yours, affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On the day on which this letter was written, he thus feelingly mentions his respected friend and physician, Dr. Lawrence:—"Poor Lawrence has almost lost the sense of hearing; and I have lost the conversation of a learned, intelligent, and communicative companion, and a friend whom long familiarity has much endeared. Lawrence is one of the best men whom I have known.—*Nostrum omnium miserere Deus.*" Pr. & Med. p. 203.

[Dr. Lawrence had long been his friend and confidant. A conversation Mrs. Thrale saw them hold together in Essex-street one day in the year 1781 or 1782 was a singular and melancholy one. Dr. Johnson was exceedingly ill, and she accompanied him thither for advice. The physician was, however, in some respects, more to be pitied than the patient: Johnson was panting under an asthma and dropsy; but Lawrence had been brought home that very morning struck with the palsy, from which he had, two hours before they came, strove to awaken himself by blisters: they were both deaf, and scarce able to speak besides; one from difficulty of breathing, the other from paralytic debility. To give and receive medical counsel, therefore, they fairly sat down on each side a table in the doctor's gloomy apartment, adorned with skeletons[1], and preserved monsters, and agreed to write Latin billets to each other. "Such a scene, &c." exclaims Mrs. Thrale, "did I never see." "You," said Johnson, "are *timidè* and *gelidè;*" finding that his friend had prescribed palliative not drastic remedies. "It is not *me*," replies poor Lawrence, in an interrupted voice; "'t is nature that is *gelidè* and *timidè*." In fact he lived but few months after, and retained his faculties still a shorter time. He was a man of strict piety and profound learning, but little skilled in the knowledge of life or manners, and Piozzi, p. 57, 58.

[1] [Mr. Malone, in his MS. notes, says, that this description is *ideal*, as Dr. Lawrence had no skeletons or monsters in his room.—ED.]

died without ever having enjoyed the reputation he so justly deserved.

Dr. Johnson's health had, indeed, been always extremely bad ever since Mrs. Thrale first knew him, and his over-anxious care to retain without blemish the perfect sanity of his mind, contributed much to disturb it. He had studied medicine diligently in all its branches; but had given particular attention to the diseases of the imagination, which he watched in himself with a solicitude destructive of his own peace, and intolerable to those he trusted. Dr. Lawrence told him one day, that if he would come and beat him once a week he would bear it; but to hear his complaint was more than *man* could support.]

It was Dr. Johnson's custom, when he wrote to Dr. Lawrence concerning his own health, to use the Latin language. I have been favoured by Miss Lawrence with one of these letters as a specimen:

"T. LAWRENCIO, MEDICO S.

"Maiis Calendis, 1782.

"Novum frigus, nova tussis, nova spirandi difficultas, novam sanguinis missionem suadent, quam tamen te inconsulto nolim fieri. Ad te venire vix possum, nec est cur ad me venias. Licere vel non licere uno verbo dicendum est; cætera mihi et Holdero[1] reliqueris. Si per te licet, imperatur nuncio Holderum ad me deducere.

"Postquàm tu discesseris quò me vertam[2]?"

[1] Mr. Holder, in the Strand, Dr. Johnson's apothecary.

[2] ["*TO DR. T. LAWRENCE.*

"*May*, 1782.

"*Fresh cold, renewed cough, and an increased difficulty of breathing; all suggest a further letting of blood, which, however, I do not choose to have done without your advice. I cannot well come to you, nor is there any occasion for you coming to me. You may say, in one word, yes or no, and leave the rest to Holder and me. If you consent, pray tell the messenger to bring Holder to me.*

"*When you shall be gone, whither shall I turn myself?*"—ED.]

Soon after the above letter, Dr. Lawrence left London, but not before the palsy had made so great a progress as to render him unable to write for himself. The following are extracts from letters addressed by Dr. Johnson to one of his daughters:

"You will easily believe with what gladness I read that you had heard once again that voice to which we have all so often delighted to attend. May you often hear it. If we had his mind, and his tongue, we could spare the rest.

"I am not vigorous, but much better than when dear Dr. Lawrence held my pulse the last time. Be so kind as to let me know, from one little interval to another, the state of his body. I am pleased that he remembers me, and hope that it never can be possible for me to forget him. July 22d, 1782.

"TO CAPTAIN LANGTON[3], IN ROCHESTER.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 20th March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—It is now long since we saw one another; and, whatever has been the reason, neither you have written to me, nor I to you. To let friendship die away by negligence and silence, is certainly not wise. It is voluntarily to throw away one of the greatest comforts of this weary pilgrimage, of which when it is, as it must be taken finally away, he that travels on alone will wonder how his esteem could be so little. Do not forget me; you see that I do not forget you. It is pleasing in the silence of solitude to think, that there is one at least, however distant, of whose benevolence there is little doubt, and whom there is yet hope of seeing again.

"Of my life, from the time we parted, the history is mournful. The spring of last year deprived me of Thrale, a man whose eye for fifteen years had scarcely been turned upon me but with respect or tenderness; for such another friend, the general course of human things will not suffer man to hope. I passed the summer at Streatham, but there was no Thrale; and having idled away the summer with a weakly body and neglected mind, I made a journey to Staffordshire on the edge of winter. The season was dreary, I was sickly, and found the friends sickly whom I went to see. After a sorrowful sojourn, I returned to a habitation possessed for the present by two sick women, where my dear old friend, Mr. Levett, to whom, as he used to tell me, I owe

"I am much delighted even with the small advances which dear Dr. Lawrence makes towards recovery. If we could have again but his mind, and his tongue in his mind, and his right hand, we should not much lament the rest. I should not despair of helping the swelled hand by electricity, if it were frequently and diligently supplied.

"Let me know, from time to time, whatever happens; and I hope I need not tell you how much I am interested in every change. Aug. 26, 1782.

"Though the account with which you favoured me in your last letter could not give me the pleasure that I wished, yet I was glad to receive it; for my affection to my dear friend makes me desirous of knowing his state, whatever it be. I beg, therefore, that you continue to let me know, from time to time, all that you observe.

"Many fits of severe illness have, for about three months past, forced my kind physician often upon my mind. I am now better; and hope gratitude, as well as distress, can be a motive to remembrance. Bolt-court, Fleet-street, February 4, 1783."—BOSWELL.

[3] Mr. Langton being at this time on duty at Rochester, he is addressed by his military title. BOSWELL.

your acquaintance, died a few weeks ago, suddenly in his bed; there passed not, I believe, a minute between health and death. At night, at Mrs. Thrale's, as I was musing[1] in my chamber, I thought with uncommon earnestness, that, however I might alter my mode of life, or whithersoever I might remove, I would endeavour to retain Levett about me: in the morning my servant brought me word that Levett was called to another state, a state for which, I think, he was not unprepared, for he was very useful to the poor. How much soever I valued him, I now wish that I had valued him more[2].

"I have myself been ill more than eight weeks of a disorder, from which, at the expense of about fifty ounces of blood, I hope I am now recovering.

"You, dear sir, have, I hope, a more cheerful scene; you see George fond of his book, and the pretty misses airy and lively, with my own little Jenny equal to the best: and in whatever can contribute to your quiet or pleasure, you have Lady Rothes ready to concur. May whatever you enjoy of good be increased, and whatever you suffer of evil be diminished. I am, dear sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. HECTOR, IN BIRMINGHAM[3].

"London, 21st March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I hope I do not very grossly flatter myself to imagine that you and dear Mrs. Careless[4] will be glad to hear some account of me. I performed the journey to London with very little inconvenience, and came safe to my habitation, where I found nothing but ill health, and, of consequence, very little cheerfulness. I then went to visit a little way into the country, where I got a complaint by a cold which has hung eight weeks upon me, and from which I am, at the expense of fifty ounces of blood, not yet free. I am afraid I must once more owe my recovery to warm weather, which seems to make no advances towards us.

"Such is my health, which will, I hope, soon grow better. In other respects I have no reason to complain. I know not that I have written any thing more generally commended than the *Lives of the Poets;* and have found the world willing enough to caress me, if my health had invited me to be in much company; but this season I have been almost wholly employed in nursing myself.

"When summer comes I hope to see you again, and will not put off my visit to the end of the year. I have lived so long in London, that I did not remember the difference of seasons.

"Your health, when I saw you, was much improved. You will be prudent enough not to put it in danger. I hope, when we meet again, we shall congratulate each other upon fair prospects of longer life; though what are the pleasures of the longest life, when placed in comparison with a happy death? I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"Without a date, but supposed to be about this time.

"DEAR SIR,—That you and dear Mrs. Careless should have care or curiosity about my health gives me that pleasure which every man feels from finding himself not forgotten. In age we feel again that love of our native place and our early friends, which, in the bustle or amusements of middle life, were overborne and suspended. You and I should now naturally cling to one another: we have outlived most of those who could pretend to rival us in each other's kindness. In our walk through life we have dropped our companions, and are now to pick up such as chance may offer us, or to travel on alone. You, indeed, have a sister, with whom you can divide the day: I have no natural friend left; but Providence has been pleased to preserve me from neglect; I have not wanted such alleviations of life as friendship could supply. My health has been, from my twentieth year, such as had seldom afforded me a single day of ease; but it is at least not worse; and I sometimes make myself believe that it is better. My disorders are, however, still sufficiently oppressive.

"I think of seeing Staffordshire again this autumn, and intend to find my way through Birmingham, where I hope to see you and dear Mrs. Careless well. I am, sir, your affectionate friend,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[For the latter half of this month of March he kept the following diary.]

"March 18.—Having been, from the middle of January, distressed by a cold, which made my respiration very laborious, and from which I was but little relieved by

[1] [In former editions these words are arranged "at night, as at Mrs. Thrale's, I was musing."—ED.]

[2] Johnson has here expressed a sentiment similar to that contained in one of Shenstone's stanzas, to which, in his life of that poet, he has given high praise:

"I prized every hour that went by,
Beyond all that had pleased me before;
But now they are gone and I sigh,
And I grieve that I prized them no more."
J. BOSWELL.

[3] A part of this letter having been torn off, I have, from the evident meaning, supplied a few words and half words at the ends and beginning of the lines.—BOSWELL.

[4] [See *ante*, p. 42.—ED.]

being blooded three times; having tried to ease the oppression of my breast by frequent opiates, which kept me waking in the night and drowsy the next day, and subjected me to the tyranny of vain imaginations; having to all this added frequent cathartick's, sometimes with mercury, I at last persuaded Dr. Lawrence, on Thursday, March 14, to let me bleed more copiously. Sixteen ounces were taken away, and from that time my breath has been free, and my breast easy. On that day I took little food, and no flesh. On Thursday night I slept with great tranquillity. On the next night (15) I took diacodium, and had a most restless night. Of the next day I remember nothing, but that I rose in the afternoon, and saw Mrs. Lennox and Seward[1].

"Sunday 17.—I lay late, and had only palfrey to dinner. I read part of Waller's Directory, a pious rational book; but in any except a very regular life difficult to practise.

"It occurred to me, that though my time might pass unemployed, no more should pass uncounted, and this has been written to-day, in consequence of that thought. I read a Greek chapter, prayed with Francis, which I now do commonly, and explained to him the Lord's Prayer, in which I find connexion not observed, I think, by the expositors. I made punch for myself and my servants, by which, in the night, I thought both my breast and imagination disordered.

"March 18.—I rose late, looked a little into books. Saw Miss Reynolds and Miss Thrale, and Nicolaida[2]; afterwards Dr. Hunter[3] came for his catalogue. I then dined on tea, &c.; then read over part of Dr. Lawrence's book 'De Temperamentis,' which seems to have been written with a troubled mind.

"My mind has been for some time much disturbed. The peace of God be with me.

"I hope to-morrow to finish Lawrence, and to write to Mrs. Aston, and to Lucy.

"19.—I rose late. I was visited by Mrs. Thrale, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Crofts[4]. I took Lawrence's paper in hand, but was chill; having fasted yesterday, I was hungry, and dined freely, then slept a little, and drank tea; then took candles, and wrote to Aston and Lucy, then went on with Lawrence, of which little remains. I prayed with Francis.

"Mens sedatior, laus Deo.

"To-morrow Shaw[5] comes. I think to finish Lawrence, and write to Langton.

"Poor Lawrence has almost lost the sense of hearing; and I have lost the conversation of a learned, intelligent, and communicative companion, and a friend whom long familiarity has much endeared. Lawrence is one of the best men whom I have known.

"Nostrum omnium miserere Deus.

"20.—Shaw came; I finished reading Lawrence. I dined liberally. Wrote a long letter to Langton, and designed to read, but was hindered by Strahan. *The ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis, and gave thanks.*

"To-morrow—To Mrs. Thrale—To write to Hector—To Dr. Taylor.

"21.—I went to Mrs. Thrale. Mr. Cox and Paradise met me at the door, and went with me in the coach. Paradise's Loss[6] In the evening wrote to Hector. At night there were eleven visitants. Conversation with Mr. Cox. When I waked I saw the penthouses covered with snow.

"22.—I spent the time idly. Mens turbata. In the afternoon it snowed. At night I wrote to Taylor about the pot, and to Hamilton about the Fœdera[7].

"23.—I came home, and found that Desmoulins had, while I was away, been in bed. Letters from Langton and Boswell. I promised L[owe; Mr. Lowe the painter] six guineas.

"24.—Sunday. I rose not early. Visitors, Allen, Davis, Windham, Dr. Horsley. Dinner at Strahan's. Came home and chatted with Williams, and read Romans ix. in Greek.

"To-morrow begin again to read the Bible; put rooms in order; copy L[owe's] letter. At night I read 11 p. and something more, of the Bible, in fifty-five minutes.

"26.—Tuesday. I copied L[owe's] let

[1] [Mr. W. Seward.—Ed.]

[2] [A learned Greek; a friend of Mr. Langton.—Ed.]

[3] [The catalogue referred to was probably that of the ancient coins in Dr. Hunter's museum, which was published in the ensuing year, with a classical dedication to the queen, which perhaps Dr. Johnson revised.—Ed.]

[4] [Probably Mr. Herbert Crofts, who had supplied him with a Life of Young. See *sub* 24th Dec. 1783.—Ed.]

[5] [Probably the editor of the Gaëlick Dictionary, who about this period was warmly engaged in the Ossian controversy, and as he took Dr. Johnson's part, probably received some assistance from him.—Ed.]

[6] [This probably refers to some property in Virginia which Mr. Paradise possessed in right of his wife, and which had been confiscated. See *Jefferson's Letters*, where he advocates Paradise's claims as being a whig and friend to American independence.—Ed.]

[7] [A set of Rymer which he was charitably endeavouring to sell for Davis, probably to Mr. Gerard Hamilton; and this was, perhaps, the occasion which made Mr. Hamilton say that he once asked him for 50*l.* for a charitable purpose See *ante*, p. 98, *n.* 5.—Ed.]

ter. Then wrote to Mrs. Thrale. Cox visited me. I sent home Dr. Lawrence's papers, with notes. I gave [Mrs.] D[esmoulins] a guinea, and found her a gown.

"27.—Wednesday. At Harley-street. Bad nights—in the evening Dr. Bromfield and his family—Merlin's steelyard given me.

"28.— Thursday. I came home. Sold Rymer for Davies; wrote to Boswell. Visitors, Dr. Percy, Mr. Crofts. I have, in ten days, written to [Mrs.] Aston, Lucy, Hector, Langton, Boswell; perhaps to all by whom my letters are desired.

"The weather, which now begins to be warm, gives me great help. I have hardly been at church this year; certainly not since the 15th of January. My cough and difficulty of breath would not permit it.

"This is the day on which, in 1752, dear Tetty died. I have now uttered a prayer of repentance and contrition; perhaps Tetty knows that I prayed for her. Perhaps Tetty is now praying for me. God help me. Thou, God, art merciful, hear my prayers, and enable me to trust in Thee.

"We were married almost seventeen years, and have now been parted thirty.

"I then read 11 p. from Ex. 36. to Lev. 7. I prayed with Fr. and used the prayer for Good-Friday.

"29.—Good-Friday. After a night of great disturbance and solicitude, such as I do not remember, I rose, drank tea, but without eating, and went to church. I was very composed, and coming home, read Hammond on one of the Psalms for the day. I then read Leviticus. Scott[1] came in. A kind letter from [Mrs.] Gastrel. I read on, then went to evening prayers, and afterwards drank tea, with buns; then read till I finished Leviticus 24 pages et sup.

"To write to [Mrs.] Gastrell[2] to-morrow.

"To look again into Hammond.

"30.—Saturday. Visitors, Paradise, and I think Horsley. Read 11 pages of the Bible. I was faint; dined on herrings and potatoes. At prayers, I think, in the evening. I wrote to [Mrs.] Gastrel, and received a kind letter from Hector. At night Lowe. Pr[ayed] with Francis.

"31.—Easter-Day. Read 15 pages of the Bible. Cætera alibi."

* * * * * *

On the foregoing curious passage—"Mar. [3] 20. The ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis, and gave thanks"—it has been the subject of discussion whether there are two distinct particulars mentioned here? Or that we are to understand the giving of thanks to be in consequence of the dissolution of the ministry? In support of the last of these conjectures may be urged his mean opinion of that ministry, which has frequently appeared in the course of this work; and it is strongly confirmed by what he said on the subject to Mr. Seward:—"I am glad the ministry is removed[4]. Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country. If they sent a messenger into the city to take up a printer, the messenger was taken up instead of the printer, and committed by the sitting alderman. If they sent one army to the relief of another, the first army was defeated and taken before the second arrived. I will not say that what they did was always wrong; but it was always done at a wrong time."

I wrote to him at different dates; regretted that I could not come to London this spring, but hoped we should meet somewhere in the summer; mentioned the state of my affairs, and suggested hopes of some preferment; informed him, that as "The Beauties of Johnson" had been published in London, some obscure scribbler had published at Edinburgh what he called "The Deformities of Johnson"

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 28th March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—The pleasure which we used to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Easter-day, we must be this year content to miss. Let us, however, pray for each other, and I hope to see one another yet from time to time with mutual delight. My disorder has been a cold, which impeded the organs of respiration, and kept me many weeks in a state of great uneasiness; but by repeated phlebotomy it is now relieved: and next to the recovery of Mrs. Boswell, I flatter myself, that you will rejoice at mine.

"What we shall do in the summer, it is yet too early to consider. You want to know what you shall do now; I do not think this time of bustle and confusion like to produce any advantage to you. Every man has those to reward and gratify who have contributed to his advancement. To come hither with such expectations at the expense of borrowed money, which I find you know not where to borrow, can hardly be considered prudent. I am sorry to find, what your solicitations seem to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to set the quiet of your whole life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at last

[1] [Lord Stowell.—ED.]

[2] [Mrs. Gastrell, of Lichfield.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Boswell had erroneously dated this extract *Jan.*, and had so placed it. Mr. Boswell does not appear to have seen the whole diary.—ED.]

[4] On the preceding day the ministry had been changed MALONE

merit nothing; all that you receive must pay for the past. You must get a place, or pine in penury, with the empty name of a great estate. Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation, and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it. Live on what you have; live if you can on less; do not borrow either for vanity or pleasure; the vanity will end in shame, and the pleasure in regret: stay therefore at home, till you have saved money for your journey hither.

"*The Beauties of Johnson* are said to have got money to the collector; if the *Deformities* have the same success, I shall be still a more extensive benefactor.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, who is I hope reconciled to me; and to the young people whom I never have offended.

"You never told me the success of your plea against the solicitors. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. GASTRELL AND MRS. ASTON.
"London, Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 30th March, 1782.

Pemb. MSS. "DEAREST LADIES,—The tenderness expressed in your kind letter makes me think it necessary to tell you that they who are pleased to wish me well, need not be any longer particularly solicitous about me. I prevailed on my physician to bleed me very copiously, almost against his inclination. However, he kept his finger on the pulse of the other hand, and, finding that I bore it well, let the vein run on. From that time I have mended, and hope I am now well. I went yesterday to church without inconvenience, and hope to go to-morrow.

"Here are great changes in the great world; but I cannot tell you more than you will find in the papers. The men have got in whom I have endeavoured to keep out; but I hope they will do better than their predecessors: it will not be easy to do worse.

"Spring seems now to approach, and I feel its benefit, which I hope will extend to dear Mrs. Aston.

"When Dr. Falconer saw me, I was at home only by accident, for I lived much with Mrs. Thrale, and had all the care from her that she could take or could be taken. But I have never been ill enough to want attendance; my disorder has been rather tedious than violent; rather irksome than painful. He needed not have made such a tragical representation.

"I am now well enough to flatter myself with some hope of pleasure from the summer. How happy would it be if we could see one another, and be all tolerably well

"Let us pray for one another. I am dearest ladies, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.
"8th April, 1782.

"DEAREST MADAM,—Your work[1] is full of very penetrating meditation, and very forcible sentiments. I read it with a full perception of the sublime, with wonder and terrour; but I cannot think of any profit from it; it seems not born to be popular. Reyn MSS

"Your system of the mental fabrick is exceedingly obscure, and, without more attention than will be willingly bestowed, is unintelligible. The plans of Burnaby will be more safely understood, and are often charming. I was delighted with the different bounty of different ages.

"I would make it produce something if I could, but I have indeed no hope. If a bookseller would buy it at all, as it must be published without a name, he would give nothing for it worth your acceptance. I am, my dearest dear, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. THRALE.
["26th] April, [1782.]

"I have been very much out of order since you sent me away; but why should I tell you, who do not care, nor desire to know. I dined with Mr. Paradise on Monday, with the Bishop of St. Asaph yesterday, with the Bishop of Chester I dine to-day, and with the academy on Saturday, with Mr. Hoole on Monday, and with Mrs. Garrick on Thursday, the 2d of May, and then—what care you?—*what then?* Lett. vol. ii. p. 237.

"The news run that we have taken seventeen French transports; that Langton's lady is lying down with her eighth child, all alive; and Mrs. Carter's Miss Sharpe is going to marry a schoolmaster sixty-two years old."

"TO MRS. THRALE.
"30th April, 1782.

"I have had a fresh cold, and been very poorly. But I was yesterday at Mr. Hoole's, where were Miss Reynolds and many others. I am going to the club.

"Since Mrs. Garrick's invitation I have a letter from Miss More[2], to engage me for the evening. I have an appointment to Miss Monkton, and another with lady Sheffield[3] at Mrs. Way's.[4]

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[1] [Probably the "*Essay on Taste*," already mentioned, *ante*, p. 307.—ED.]

[2] [Miss Hannah More.—ED.]

[3] [The first wife of the first Lord Sheffield.—ED.]

[4] [Wife of Daniel Way, Esq. of the Exchequer

"Two days ago Mr. Cumberland had his third night[1], which, after all expenses, put into his own pocket five pounds. He has lost his plume.

"Mrs. S———[2] refused to sing, at the Duchess of Devonshire's request, a song to the Prince of Wales. They pay for the ———[3] neither principal nor interest; and poor Garrick's funeral expenses are yet unpaid, though the undertaker is broken. Could you have a better purveyor for a little scandal? But I wish I was at Streatham."]

Notwithstanding his afflicted state of body and mind this year, the following correspondence affords a proof not only of his benevolence and conscientious readiness to relieve a good man from errour, but by his clothing one of the sentiments in his "Rambler," in different language, not inferior to that of the original, shows his extraordinary command of clear and forcible expression.

A clergyman at Bath wrote to him, that in "The Morning Chronicle," a passage in "The Beauties of Johnson," article Death, had been pointed out as supposed by some readers to recommend suicide, the words being "To die is the fate of man; but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly;" and respectfully suggesting to him, that such an erroneous notion of any sentence in the writings of an acknowledged friend of religion and virtue should not pass uncontradicted.

Johnson thus answered this clergyman's letter:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. ———, AT BATH.

"15th May, 1782.

"SIR,—Being now in the country in a state of recovery, as I hope, from a very oppressive disorder, I cannot neglect the acknowledgment of your Christian letter. The book called 'The Beauties of Johnson' is the production of I know not whom; I never saw it but by casual inspection, and considered myself as utterly disengaged from its consequences. Of the passage you mention, I remember some notice in some paper: but knowing that it must be misrepresented, I thought of it no more, nor do I know where to find it in my own books. I am accustomed to think little of newspapers; but an opinion so weighty and serious as yours has determined me to do, what I should without your seasonable admonition have omitted: and I will direct my thought to be shown in its true state[4]. If I could find the passage I would direct you to it. I suppose the tenour is this:—'Acute diseases are the immediate and inevitable strokes of Heaven; but of them the pain is short, and the conclusion speedy; chronical disorders, by which we are suspended in tedious torture between life and death, are commonly the effect of our own misconduct and intemperance. To die, &c.'—This, sir, you see is all true and all blameless. I hope some time in the next week to have all rectified. My health has been lately much shaken; if you favour me with any answer, it will be a comfort to me to know that I have your prayers. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

This letter, as might be expected, had its full effect, and the clergyman acknowledged it in grateful and pious terms[5].

The following letters require no extracts from mine to introduce them.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 3d June, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—The earnestness and tenderness of your letter is such, that I cannot think myself showing it more respect than it claims, by sitting down to answer it the day on which I received it.

"This year has afflicted me with a very irksome and severe disorder. My respiration has been much impeded, and much blood has been taken away. I am now harassed by a catarrhous cough, from which my purpose is to seek relief by change of air; and I am, therefore, preparing to go to Oxford.

"Whether I did right in dissuading you

Office, of whom there is so copious an account in Nicholls's continuation of Bowyer's Anecdotes.—ED.]

[1] [The play of the *Walloons*, acted about this time; but the *third* night was the 2d of May.—ED.]

[2] [Sheridan.—ED.]

[3] [Theatre, Drury-lane, sold by Garrick to Sheridan ED.]

[4] What follows appeared in the Morning Chronicle of May 29, 1782.—"A correspondent having mentioned in the Morning Chronicle of December 12, the last clause of the following paragraph, as seeming to favour suicide; we are requested to print the whole passage, that its true meaning may appear, which is not to recommend suicide but exercise. Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from Heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death, indeed, falls from Heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of man; but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly."—BOSWELL.

[5] The correspondence may be seen at length in the Gentleman's Magazine, Feb. 1786.—BOSWELL.

from coming to London this spring, I will not determine. You have not lost much by missing my company; I have scarcely been well for a single week. I might have received comfort from your kindness; but you would have seen me afflicted, and, perhaps, found me peevish. Whatever might have been your pleasure or mine, I know not how I could have honestly advised you to come hither with borrowed money. Do not accustom yourself to consider debt only as an inconvenience; you will find it a calamity. Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided. Consider a man whose fortune is very narrow; whatever be his rank by birth, or whatever his reputation by intellectual excellence, what can he do? or what evil can he prevent? That he cannot help the needy is evident; he has nothing to spare. But, perhaps, his advice or admonition may be useful. His poverty will destroy his influence: many more can find that he is poor, than that he is wise; and few will reverence the understanding that is of so little advantage to its owner. I say nothing of the personal wretchedness of a debtor, which, however, has passed into a proverb. Of riches it is not necessary to write the praise. Let it, however, be remembered, that he who has money to spare, has it always in his power to benefit others; and of such power a good man must always be desirous.

"I am pleased with your account of Easter[1]. We shall meet, I hope, in autumn, both well and both cheerful; and part each the better for the other's company.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and to the young charmers. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

'London, 4th June, 1782.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 241, 243, 249.

"Wisely was it said by him who said it first, that this world is all ups and downs. You know, dearest lady, that when I pressed your hand at parting, I was rather down. When I came hither, I ate my dinner well, but was so harassed by the cough, that Mr. Strahan said, it was an extremity which he could not have believed 'without the sensible and true avouch' of his own observation. I was indeed almost sinking under it, when Mrs. Williams happened to cry out that such a cough should be stilled by opium or any means. I took yesterday half an ounce of bark, and knew not whether opium would counteract it, but remembering no prohibition in the medical books, and knowing that to quiet the cough with opium was one of Lawrence's last orders, I took two grains, which gave me not sleep indeed, but rest, and that rest has given me strength and courage.

"This morning to my bed-side came dear Sir Richard [Jebb]. I told him of the opium, and he approved it, and told me, if I went to Oxford, which he rather advised, that I should strengthen the constitution by the bark, tame the cough with opium, keep the body open, and support myself by liberal nutriment

"As to the journey I know not that it will be necessary—*desine mollium tandem querularum.*"

"Sunday, 8th June[2], 1782.

"I have this day taken a passage to Oxford for Monday—not to frisk, as you express it with very unfeeling irony, but to catch at the hopes of better health. The change of place may do something. To leave the house where so much has been suffered affords some pleasure."

'Oxford, 12th June, 1782.

"I find no particular salubrity in this air; my respiration is very laborious; my appetite is good, and my sleep commonly long and quiet; but a very little motion disables me.

"I dine to-day with Dr. Adams, and to-morrow with Dr. Wetherel[3]. Yesterday Dr. Edwards[4] invited some men from Exeter college, whom I liked very well These variations of company help the mind though they cannot do much for the body. But the body receives some help from a cheerful mind."

"Oxford, 17th June, 1782.

"Oxford has done, I think, what for the present it can do, and I am going slyly to take a place in the coach for Wednesday, and you or my sweet *Queeney* will fetch me on Thursday, and see what you can make of me.

"To-day I am going to dine with Dr. Wheeler, and to-morrow Dr. Edwards has invited Miss Adams and Miss More. Yesterday I went with Dr. Edwards to his living. He has really done all that he could do for my relief or entertainment, and really drives me away by doing too much."]

[1] Which I celebrated in the Church of England chapel at Edinburgh, founded by Lord Chief Baron Smith, of respectable and pious memory.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi had misdated this letter 8th July, and consequently misplaced it.—ED.]

[3] [Master of University College. See *ante*, vo. i. p. 523.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 200.—ED.]

"TO MR. PERKINS.

"28th July, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I am much pleased that you are going a very long journey, which may by proper conduct restore your health and prolong your life.

"Observe these rules:

"1. Turn all care out of your head as soon as you mount the chaise.

"2. Do not think about frugality; your health is worth more than it can cost.

"3. Do not continue any day's journey to fatigue.

"4. Take now and then a day's rest.

"5. Get a smart sea-sickness, if you can.

"6. Cast away all anxiety, and keep your mind easy.

"This last direction is the principal; with an unquiet mind, neither exercise, nor diet, nor physick, can be of much use.

"I wish you, dear sir, a prosperous journey, and a happy recovery. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate, humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"24th August, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—Being uncertain whether I should have any call this autumn into the country, I did not immediately answer your kind letter. I have no call; but if you desire to meet me at Ashbourne, I believe I can come thither; if you had rather come to London, I can stay at Streatham: take your choice.

"This year has been very heavy. From the middle of January to the middle of June, I was battered by one disorder after another! I am now very much recovered, and hope still to be better. What happiness it is that Mrs. Boswell has escaped.

"My *Lives* are reprinting, and I have forgotten the authour of Gray's character[1]. write immediately, and it may be perhaps yet inserted.

"Of London or Ashbourne you have your free choice; at any place I shall be glad to see you. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On the 30th August, I informed him that my honoured father had died that morning; a complaint under which he had long laboured having suddenly come to a crisis, while I was upon a visit at the seat of Sir Charles Preston, from whence I had hastened the day before, upon receiving a letter by express.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 7th Sept. 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I have struggled through this year with so much infirmity of body, and such strong impressions of the fragility of life, that death, whenever it appears, fills me with melancholy; and I cannot hear without emotion of the removal of any one, whom I have known, into another state.

"Your father's death had every circumstance that could enable you to bear it; it was at a mature age, and it was expected, and as his general life had been pious, his thoughts had doubtless for many years past been turned upon eternity. That you did not find him sensible must doubtless grieve you; his disposition towards you was undoubtedly that of a kind, though not of a fond father. Kindness, at least actual, is in our power, but fondness is not; and if by negligence or imprudence you had extinguished his fondness, he could not at will rekindle it. Nothing then remained between you but mutual forgiveness of each other's faults, and mutual desire of each other's happiness.

"I shall long to know his final disposition of his fortune.

"You, dear sir, have now a new station, and have therefore new cares, and new employments. Life, as Cowley seems to say, ought to resemble a well-ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium should be simple, and should promise little. Begin your new course of life with the least show, and the least expense possible: you may at pleasure increase both, but you cannot easily diminish them. Do not think your estate your own, while any man can call upon you for money which you cannot pay: therefore, begin with timorous parsimony. Let it be your first care not to be in any man's debt.

"When the thoughts are extended to a future state, the present life seems hardly worthy of all those principles of conduct and maxims of prudence which one generation of men has transmitted to another; but upon a closer view, when it is perceived how much evil is produced and how much good is impeded by embarrassment and distress, and how little room the expedients of poverty leave for the exercise of virtue, it grows manifest that the boundless importance of the next life enforces some attention to the interests of this.

"Be kind to the old servants, and secure the kindness of the agents and factors. Do not disgust them by asperity, or unwelcome gaiety, or apparent suspicion. From them you must learn the real state of your affairs, the characters of your tenants, and the value of your lands.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell. I think her expectations from air and exercise are the best that she can form. I hope she will live long and happily.

"I forgot whether I told you that Rasay has been here. We dined cheerfully to

[1] The Rev. Mr. Temple, vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall.—BOSWELL

gener. I entertained lately a young gentleman from Corrichatachin.

"I received your letters only this morning. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In answer to my next letter, I received one from him, dissuading me from hastening to him as I had proposed. What is proper for publication is the following paragraph, equally just and tender:

"One expense, however, I would not have you to spare: let nothing be omitted that can preserve Mrs. Boswell, though it should be necessary to transplant her for a time into a softer climate. She is the prop and stay of your life. How much must your children suffer by losing her!"

My wife was now so much convinced of his sincere friendship for me, and regard for her, that without any suggestion on my part, she wrote him a very polite and grateful letter.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. BOSWELL.

"London, 7th September, 1782.

"DEAR LADY,—I have not often received so much pleasure as from your invitation to Auchinleck. The journey thither and back is, indeed, too great for the latter part of the year; but if my health were fully recovered, I would suffer no little heat and cold, nor a wet or a rough road, to keep me from you. I am, indeed, not without hope of seeing Auchinleck again; but to make it a pleasant place I must see its lady well, and brisk, and airy. For my sake, therefore, among many greater reasons, take care, dear madam, of your health, spare no expense, and want no attendance that can procure ease or preserve it. Be very careful to keep your mind quiet; and do not think it too much to give an account of your recovery to, madam, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[In the autumn of this year he accompanied Mrs. Thrale to Brighthelmstone, where, having got a little French print of some people skating, with these lines written under—

Piozzi, p. 109.

"Sur un mince chrystal l'hyver conduit leurs pas:
Le précipice est sous la glace.
Telle est de nos plaisirs la légère surface:
Glissez, mortels; n'appuyez pas—"

she begged translations from every body. Dr. Johnson gave her this:

"O'er ice the rapid skaiter flies,
With sport above and death below:
Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
Thus lightly touch and quickly go."]

[The following letters[1] prove how constant and zealous was his friendship for Mr. Lowe.

"TO MR. LOWE.

"22d October, 1781.

"SIR,—I congratulate you on the good that has befallen you. I always told you that it would come. I would not, however, have you flatter yourself too soon with punctuality. You must not expect the other half year at Christmas. You may use the money as your needs require; but save what you can. MS.

"You must undoubtedly write a letter of thanks to your benefactor in your own name I have put something on the other side. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO LORD SOUTHWELL.

"MY LORD,—The allowance which you are pleased to make me, I received on the by Mr. Paget. Of the joy which it brought your lordship cannot judge because you cannot imagine my distress. It was long since I had known a morning without solicitude for noon, or lain down at night without foreseeing with terror the distresses of the morning. My debts were small but many; my creditors were poor, and therefore troublesome. Of this misery your lordship's bounty has given me an intermission. May your lordship live long to do much good, and to do for many what you have done for, my lord, your lordship's, &c. MS.

"M. LOWE."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 7th December, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—Having passed almost this whole year in a succession of disorders, I went in October to Brighthelmstone, whither I came in a state of so much weakness that I rested four times in walking between the inn and the lodging. By physick and abstinence I grew better, and am now reasonably easy, though at a great distance from health. I am afraid, however, that health begins, after seventy, and long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the established order of the creation, as it is vain to oppose it. He that lives must grow old; and he that would rather grow old than die has God to thank for the infirmities of old age.

"At your long silence I am rather angry You do not, since now you are the head of your house, think it worth your while to try whether you or your friend can live longer without writing; nor suspect, after so many years of friendship, that when I do not write to you I forget you. Put all such useless jealousies out of your head, and disdain to regulate your own practice by the practice

[1] [Communicated by J. H. Markland, Esq.—Ed.]

of another, or by any other principle than the desire of doing right

"Your economy, I suppose, begins now to be settled; your expenses are adjusted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Resolve not to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness: it certainly destroys liberty; and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

"Let me know the history of your life since your accession to your estate;—how many houses, how many cows, how much land in your own hand, and what bargains you make with your tenants.

* * * * * *

"Of my 'Lives of the Poets' they have printed a new edition in octavo, I hear, of three thousand. Did I give a set to Lord Hailes? If I did not, I will do it out of these. What did you make of all your copy?

"Mrs. Thrale and the three misses are now, for the winter, in Argyll-street. Sir Joshua Reynolds has been out of order, but is well again; and I am, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 20th Dec. 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I was made happy by your kind letter, which gave us the agreeable hopes of seeing you in Scotland again.

"I am much flattered by the concern you are pleased to take in my recovery. I am better, and hope to have it in my power to convince you by my attention, of how much consequence I esteem your health to the world and to myself. I remain, sir, with grateful respect, your obliged and obedient servant,

"MARGARET BOSWELL."

The death of Mr. Thrale had made a very material alteration with respect to Johnson's reception in that family. The manly authority of the husband no longer curbed the lively exuberance of the lady; and as her vanity had been fully gratified, by having the Colossus of Literature attached to her for many years, she gradually became less assiduous to please him. Whether her attachment to him was already divided by another object, I am unable to ascertain; but it is plain that Johnson's penetration was alive to her neglect or forced attention; for on the 6th of October this year we find him making a "parting use of the library" at Streatham, and pronouncing a prayer which he composed on leaving Mr. Thrale's family.

"Almighty God, Father of all mercy, help me by thy grace, that I may, with humble and sincere thankfulness, remember the comforts and conveniences which I have enjoyed at this place; and that I may resign them with holy submission, equally trusting in thy protection when thou givest and when thou takest away. Have mercy upon me, O Lord! have mercy upon me!

"To thy fatherly protection, O Lord, I commend this family. Bless, guide, and defend them, that they may so pass through this world, as finally to enjoy in thy presence everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

One cannot read this prayer without some emotions not very favourable to the lady whose conduct occasioned it [1].

The next day, October 7, he made the following memorandum:

"7th October.

"I was called early. I packed up my bundles, and used the foregoing prayer, with my morning devotions somewhat, I think, enlarged. Being earlier than the family, I read St. Paul's farewell in the Acts, and then read fortuitously in the Gospels, which was my parting use of the library."

And in one of his memorandum-books I find, "Sunday, went to church at Streatham. *Templo valedixi cum osculo.*"

He met Mr. Philip Metcalfe often at Sir Joshua Reynolds's and other places, and was a good deal with him at Brighthelmstone this autumn, being pleased at once with his excellent table and animated conversation. Mr. Metcalfe showed him great respect, and sent him a note that he might have the use of his carriage whenever he pleased. Johnson (3d October, 1782) returned this polite answer: "Mr. Johnson is very much obliged by the kind offer of the carriage, but he has no desire of using Mr. Metcalfe's carriage, except when he can have the pleasure of Mr. Metcalfe's company." Mr. Metcalfe could not but be highly pleased that his company was thus valued by Johnson, and he frequently attended him in airings. They also went together to Chichester, and they visited Petworth, and Cowdry, the venerable seat of the Lords Montacute [2]. "Sir," said Johnson, "I should like

[1] [Mr. Boswell's dislike of Mrs. Thrale has led him here into a series of blunders and misrepresentations. Dr. Johnson meant nothing of what Mr Boswell attributes to him—he makes a *parting use of the library*—makes a *valediction* to the *church*, and pronounces a prayer on quitting "*a place* where he had enjoyed so much comfort," *not* because Mrs. Thrale made him less welcome there, but because *she*, and *he with her*, were leaving Streatham. We shall see by and by, that when Mr. Boswell came to town, *six months after this*, he found his friend domiciliated in Mrs. Thrale's new residence in Argyll-street.—ED.]

[2] This venerable mansion has since [Sept.

to stay here four-and-twenty hours. We see here how our ancestors lived."

That his curiosity was still unabated appears from two letters to Mr. John Nichols, of the 10th and 20th of October this year. In one he says, "I have looked into your 'Anecdotes,' and you will hardly thank a lover of literary history for telling you that he has been much informed and gratified. I wish you would add your own discoveries and intelligence to those of Dr. Rawlinson[1], and undertake the Supplement to Wood. Think of it." In the other, "I wish, sir, you could obtain some fuller information of Jortin[2], Markland[3], and Thirlby[4]. They were three contemporaries of great eminence."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"Brighthelmstone, 14th Nov. 1782.

DEAR SIR,—I heard yesterday of your late disorder, and should think ill of myself if I had heard of it without alarm. I heard likewise of your recovery, which I sincerely wish to be complete and permanent. Your country has been in danger of losing one of its brightest ornaments, and I of losing one of my oldest and kindest friends; but I hope you will still live long, for the honour of the nation; and that more enjoyment of your elegance, your intelligence, and your benevolence is still reserved for, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

The Reverend Mr. Wilson[5] having dedicated to him his "Archæological Dictionary," that mark of respect was thus acknowledged:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. WILSON.

"CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE.

"31st December, 1782.

"REVEREND SIR,—That I have long omitted to return you thanks for the honour conferred upon me by your dedication, I entreat you with great earnestness not to consider as more faulty than it is. A very importunate and oppressive disorder has for some time debarred me from the pleasures and obstructed me in the duties of life. The esteem and kindness of wise and good men is one of the last pleasures which I can be content to lose; and gratitude to those from whom this pleasure is received is a duty of which I hope never to be reproached with the final neglect. I therefore now return you thanks for the notice which I have received from you, and which I consider as giving to my name not only more bulk, but more weight; not only as extending its superficies, but as increasing its value.

1793] been totally destroyed by fire.—MALONE. [There is a popular superstition that this inheritance is *accursed*, for having been part of the plunder of the church at the *Dissolution;* and some lamentable accidents have given countenance to the vulgar prejudice. When the Editor visited the ruins of Cowdray twenty years ago, he was reminded (in addition to olden stories) that the *curse of fire and water* had recently fallen on Cowdray; its noble owner, Viscount Montague, the last male of his ancient race, having been drowned in the Rhine at Schaffhausen, within a few days of the destruction of Cowdray: and the good folks of the neighbourhood did not scruple to prophesy that it would turn out a fatal inheritance. At that period the present possessor, Mr. Poyntz, who had married Lord Montague's sister and heiress, had two sons, who seemed destined to inherit Cowdray; but, on the 7th July, 1815, these young gentlemen boating off Bognor with their father on a very fine day, the boat was unaccountably upset, and the two youths perished; and thus was once more fulfilled the forebodings of superstition. See some curious observations on the subject of the fatality attending the inheritance of confiscated church property in Sir Henry Spelman's Treatise on the "History and Fall of Sacrilege."—ED.]

[1] [Dr. Richard Rawlinson, an eminent antiquary, and a great benefactor to the University of Oxford. He founded the Anglo-Saxon professorship there, and bequeathed to it all his collection of MSS., medals, antiquities, and curiosities, and amongst them large collections for a supplement to Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, to which Dr. Johnson refers. He died in 1754, æt. 65.—ED.]

[2] [Dr. John Jortin, a voluminous and respectable writer on general subjects, as well as an eminent divine. He died in August, 1770, Archdeacon of London and Vicar of Kensington; where his piety and charity, greater even than his great learning and talents, are still remembered. His laconic epitaph in Kensington churchyard, dictated by himself, contains a new turn of that thought which must be common to all epitaphs, —"Johannes Jortin mortalis esse desiit, A. S. 1770, æt. 72." *John Jortin ceased to be mortal*, &c.—ED.]

[3] [Jeremiah Markland was an eminent critic, particularly in Greek literature; but the shyness of his disposition and the almost ascetic seclusion of his long life limited at once his utility and his fame.—See *ante*, p. 258. He died in 1776, æt. 83.—ED.]

[4] [Styan Thirlby; a critic of at least as much reputation as he deserves. He studied successively divinity, medicine, and law. He seems to have been of a temper at once perverse and indolent, and to have dimmed and disgraced his talents by habits of intoxication. He complains, in a strain of self-satisfaction, that "when a man (meaning himself) thus towers by intellectual exaltation above his contemporaries, he is represented as *drunken*, or *lazy*, or *capricious*." He died in 1753, æt. 61.—ED.]

[5] [A just and concise character of Mr. Wilson is given by Dr. Whitaker in the dedication of a plate, in the History of Whalley. "Viro Reverendo Thomæ Wilson STB ecclesiæ de Clitheroe, ministro—sodali jucundissimo—ἀρχαιολογῳ insigni —felici juvenum institutori." Mr. Wilson died in 1813, aged sixty-seven.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

Your book was evidently wanted, and will, I hope, find its way into the school; to which, however, I do not mean to confine it; for no man has so much skill in ancient rites and practices as not to want it. As I suppose myself to owe part of your kindness to my excellent friend, Dr. Patten[1], he has likewise a just claim to my acknowledgment, which I hope you, sir, will transmit. There will soon appear a new edition of my Poetical Biography: if you will accept of a copy to keep me in your mind, be pleased to let me know how it may be conveniently conveyed to you. This present is small, but it is given with good-will by, reverend sir, your most, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"In 1783 he was more severely afflicted than ever, as will appear in the course of his correspondence; but still the same ardour for literature, the same constant piety, the same kindness for his friends, and the same vivacity, both in conversation and writing, distinguished him.

[In the early part of the year, however, his health had improved considerably, as appears from the following letter:

"10th Feb. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—It was not insensibility of your kindness, I hope, that made me negligent of answering your letter, for which I now return you thanks, and which I consider as a fresh proof of your regard.

"I am better, much better, and am now in hope of being gradually well, and of being able [to] show some gratitude for the kindness of my friends. I do not despair of seeing Oxford in the summer, and, in the mean time, hope now and then to see you here. I am, dear sir, your most obliged

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

Having given Dr. Johnson a full account of what I was doing at Auchinleck, and particularly mentioned what I knew would please him,—my having brought an old man of eighty-eight from a lonely cottage to a comfortable habitation within my inclosures, where he had good neighbours near to him,—I received an answer in February, of which I extract what follows:

"I am delighted with your account of your activity at Auchinleck, and wish the

[1] [A letter from Dr. Patten[1], and Dr. Johnson's answer, have appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine:* the latter is subjoined.—ED.]

DR. JOHNSON'S ANSWER.

"24th September, 1781.

DEAR SIR,—It is so long since we passed any time together, that you may be allowed to have forgotten some part of my character; and I know not upon what other supposition I can pass without censure or complaint the ceremony of your address. Let me not trifle time in words, to which while we speak or write them we assign little meaning. Whenever you favour me with a letter, treat me as one that is glad of your kindness and proud of your esteem.

"The papers which have been sent for my perusal I am ready to inspect, if you judge my inspection necessary or useful: but, indeed, I do not; for what advantage can arise from it? A dictionary consists of independent parts, and therefore one page is not much a specimen of the rest. It does not occur to me that I can give any assistance to the authour, and for my own interest I resign it into your hands, and do not suppose that I shall ever see my name with regret where you shall think it proper to be put.

"I think it, however, my duty to inform a writer who intends me so great an honour, that in my opinion he would have consulted his interest by dedicating his work to some powerful and popular neighbour, who can give him more than a name. What will the world do but look on and laugh when one scholar dedicates to another?

"If I had been consulted about this Lexicon of Antiquities while it was yet only a design, I should have recommended rather a division of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman particulars into three volumes, than a combination in one. The Hebrew part, at least, I would have wished to separate, as it might be a very popular book, of which the use might be extended from men of learning down to the English reader, and which might become a concomitant of the Family Bible.

"When works of a multifarious and extensive kind are undertaken in the country, the necessary books are not always known. I remember a very learned and ingenious clergyman[2], of whom, when he had published notes upon the Psalms, I inquired what was his opinion of Hammond's Commentary, and was answered, that he had never heard of it. As this gentleman has the opportunity of consulting you, it needs not be supposed that he has not heard of all the proper books; but unless he is near some library, I know not now he could peruse them; and if he is conscious that his *supellex* is *nimis angusta*, it would be prudent to delay his publication till his deficiences may be supplied.

"It seems not very candid to hint any suspicions of imperfection in a work which I have not seen, yet what I have said ought to be excused, since I cannot but wish well to a learned man, who has elected me for the honour of a dedication, and to whom I am indebted for a correspondence so valuable as yours. And I beg that I may not lose any part of his kindness, which I consider with respectful gratitude. Of you, dear sir, I entreat that you will never again forget for so long a time your most humble servant,

"SAMUEL JOHNSON."

[1] [Dr. Thomas Patten had been a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, A. M. 1736, D. D. 1754. He was afterwards Rector of Childry, Berks, where he died 28th February, 1790.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 284, an allusion to Mr. Mudge's notes on the Psalms, whence Mr. Chalmers very justly concludes that he is the person meant.—ED.]

old gentleman, whom you have so kindly removed, may live long to promote your prosperity by his prayers. You have now a new character and new duties: think on them and practise them.

"Make an impartial estimate of your revenue; and whatever it is, live upon less. Resolve never to be poor. Frugality is not only the basis of quiet, but of beneficence. No man can help others that wants help himself. We must have enough before we have to spare.

"I am glad to find that Mrs. Boswell grows well; and hope that, to keep her well, no care nor caution will be omitted. May you long live happily together.

"When you come hither, pray bring with you Baxter's Anacreon. I cannot get that edition in London [1]."

On Friday, March 21, having arrived in London the night before, I was glad to find him at Mrs. Thrale's house, in Argyll-street, appearances of friendship between them being still kept up. I was shown into his room; and after the first salutation he said, "I am glad you are come; I am very ill." He looked pale, and was distressed with a difficulty of breathing; but after the common inquiries, he assumed his usual strong animated style of conversation. Seeing me now for the first time as a *laird*, or proprietor of land, he began thus: "Sir, the superiority of a country gentleman over the people upon his estate is very agreeable; and he who says he does not feel it to be agreeable, lies; for it must be agreeable to have a casual superiority over those who are by nature equal with us." BOSWELL. "Yet, sir, we see great proprietors of land who prefer living in London." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the pleasure of living in London, the intellectual superiority that is enjoyed there, may counterbalance the other. Besides, sir, a man may prefer the state of the country gentleman upon the whole, and yet there may never be a moment when he is willing to make the change, to quit London for it." He said, "It is better to have five *per cent.* out of land, than out of money, because it is more secure; but the readiness of transfer and promptness of interest make many people rather choose the funds. Nay, there is another disadvantage belonging to land, compared with money: a man is not so much afraid of being a hard creditor, as of being a hard landlord." BOSWELL. "Because there is a sort of kindly connexion between a landlord and his tenants." JOHNSON. "No, sir; many landlords with us never see their tenants. It is because, if a landord drives away his tenants, he may not get others: whereas the demand for money is so great, it may always be lent."

He talked with regret and indignation of the factious opposition to government at this time, and imputed it in a great measure to the revolution. "Sir," said he, in a low voice, having come nearer to me, while his old prejudices seemed to be fermenting in his mind, "this Hanoverian family is *isolée* here. They have no friends. Now the Stuarts had friends who stuck by them so late as 1745. When the right of the king is not reverenced, there will not be reverence for those appointed by the king [2]."

His observation that the present royal family has no friends has been too much justified by the very ungrateful behaviour of many who were under great obligations to his majesty: at the same time there are honourable exceptions; and the very next year after this conversation, and ever since, the king has had as extensive as generous support as ever was given to any monarch, and has had the satisfaction of knowing that he was more and more endeared to his people.

He repeated to me his verses on Mr. Levett, with an emotion which gave them full effect; and then he was pleased to say, "You must be as much with me as you can. You have done me good. You cannot think how much better I am since you came in."

He sent a message to acquaint Mrs. Thrale that I was arrived. I had not seen her since her husband's death. She soon appeared, and favoured me with an invitation to stay to dinner, which I accepted. There was no other company but herself and three of her daughters, Dr. Johnson, and I. She too said she was very glad I was

[1] Dr Johnson should seem not to have sought diligently for Baxter's Anacreon; for there are two editions of that book, and they are frequently found in the London sale catalogues.—MALONE

[2] [Even Johnson's mind was not superior to early prejudices. When he was young, no doubt there was a great body, perhaps the numerical majority of the nation, who were opposed to, or at least, not cordial to the Hanover succession: but the events of 1745 showed how small in number and how weak in feeling the jacobites had become. The revolution, no doubt, and a great accession of strength to the democratic branch of the constitution—the more general diffusion of knowledge, and the greater spread of political discussion, led to what Dr. Johnson called *faction*, to the American revolt, and to all the important consequences which, since his time, have resulted from that event; amongst which is, no doubt, the looking upon the king rather as the *first magistrate* than as the object of the personal reverence and feudal enthusiasm of former days: but tha any *jacobite* tendency, or any doubt of the *right* of the reigning family, entered *directly* into the political difficulties of the period in question Dr. Johnson could not have dispassionately believed.—ED.]

come; for she was going to Bath, and should have been sorry to leave Dr. Johnson before I came. This seemed to be attentive and kind; and I, who had not been informed of any change [1], imagined all to be as well as formerly. He was little inclined to talk at dinner, and went to sleep after it; but when he joined us in the drawing-room he seemed revived, and was again himself.

Talking of conversation, he said, "There must, in the first place, be knowledge—there must be materials; in the second place, there must be a command of words; in the third place, there must be imagination, to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in; and, in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind, and a resolution that is not to be overcome by failures: this last is an essential requisite; for want of it many people do not excel in conversation. Now *I* want it; I throw up the game upon losing a trick." I wondered to hear him talk thus of himself, and said, "I don't know, sir, how this may be; but I am sure you beat other people's cards out of their hands." I doubt whether he heard this remark. While he went on talking triumphantly, I was fixed in admiration, and said to Mrs. Thrale, "O for short-hand to take this down!" "You'll carry it all in your head," said she: "a long head is as good as short-hand."

It has been observed and wondered at, that Mr. Charles Fox never talked with any freedom in the presence of Dr. Johnson; though it is well known, and I myself can witness, that his conversation is various, fluent, and exceedingly agreeable. Johnson's own experience, however, of that gentleman's reserve, was a sufficient reason for his going on thus: "Fox never talks in private company; not from any determination not to talk, but because he has not the first motion. A man who is used to the applause of the house of commons has no wish for that of a private company. A man accustomed to throw for a thousand pounds, if set down to throw for sixpence, would not be at the pains to count his dice. Burke's talk is the ebullition of his mind. He does not talk from a desire of distinction, but because his mind is full [2]."

He thus curiously characterised one of our old acquaintance: "********[3] is a good man, sir; but he is a vain man and a liar. He, however, only tells lies of vanity; of victories, for instance, in conversation, which never happened." This alluded to a story, which I had repeated from that gentleman, to entertain Johnson with its wild bravado. "This Johnson, sir," said he. "whom you are all afraid of, will shrink, if you come close to him in argument, and roar as loud as he. He once maintained the paradox, that there is no beauty but in utility. 'Sir,' said I, 'what say you to the peacock's tail, which is one of the most beautiful objects in nature, but would have as much utility if its feathers were all of one colour.' He *felt* what I thus produced, and had recourse to his usual expedient, ridicule; exclaiming, 'A peacock has a tail, and a fox has a tail;' and then he burst out into a laugh. 'Well, sir,' said I, with a strong voice, looking him full in the face, 'you have unkennelled your fox; pursue him if you dare.' He had not a word to say, sir." Johnson told me that this was fiction from beginning to end [4].

After musing for some time, he said, "I wonder how I should have any enemies; for I do harm to nobody [5]." BOSWELL. "In the first place, sir, you will be pleased to recollect that you set out with attacking the Scotch; so you got a whole nation for your enemies." JOHNSON. "Why, I own that by my definition of *oats* I meant to vex them." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, can you trace the cause of your antipathy to the Scotch?" JOHNSON. "I cannot,

[1] [Nor was there, hitherto, any visible change. There was, as yet, no sign of that unhappy insanity (for it seems nothing less) which produced Mrs. Thrale's second marriage: see *ante*, p. 322, *note*.—ED.]

[2] [This may seem somewhat at variance with the supposition that, in a former passage, *ante*, p. 151, Mr. Burke was alluded to; but we have seen how often Johnson could, in such matters, advance contradictory opinions.—ED.]

[3] [This alludes to old Mr. Sheridan; and recollecting that Boswell *professes* to have endeavoured to reconcile him with Dr. Johnson, we cannot but wonder at the *mode* in which he attempted to accomplish that object.—ED.]

[4] Were I to insert all the stories which have been told of contests boldly maintained with him, imaginary victories obtained over him, of reducing him to silence, and of making him own that his antagonist had the better of him in argument, my volumes would swell to an immoderate size. One instance, I find, has circulated both in conversation and in print; that when he would not allow the Scotch writers to have merit, the late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, asserted, that he could name one Scotch writer whom Dr. Johnson himself would allow to have written better than any man of the age; and upon Johnson's asking who it was, answered, "Lord Bute, when he signed the warrant for your pension." Upon which Johnson, struck with the repartee, acknowledged that this *was* true. When I mentioned it to Johnson, "Sir," said he, "if Rose said this, I never heard it."—BOSWELL.

[5] This reflection was very natural in a man of a good heart, who was not conscious of any ill-will to mankind, though the sharp sayings which were sometimes produced by his discrimination and vivacity, which he perhaps did not recollect, were, I am afraid, too often remembered with resentment.—BOSWELL.

sir .” Boswell “Old Mr. Sheridan says it was because they sold Charles the First.” Johnson. “Then, sir, old Mr. Sheridan has found out a very good reason.’

Surely the most obstinate and sulky nationality, the most determined aversion to this great and good man, must be cured, when he is seen thus playing with one of his prejudices, of which he candidly admitted that he could not tell the reason. It was, however, probably owing to his having had in his view the worst part of the Scottish nation, the needy adventurers[2], many of whom he thought were advanced above their merits by means which he did not approve. Had he in his early life been in Scotland, and seen the worthy, sensible, independent gentlemen, who live rationally and hospitably at home, he never could have entertained such unfavourable and unjust notions of his fellow-subjects. And accordingly we find, that when he did visit Scotland, in the latter period of his life, he was fully sensible of all that it deserved, as I have already pointed out when speaking of his “Journey to the Western Islands.”

Next day, Saturday, 22d March, I found him still at Mrs. Thrale’s, but he told me that he was to go to his own house in the afternoon. He was better, but I perceived he was but an unruly patient; for Sir Lucas Pepys, who visited him, while I was with him, said, “If you were *tractable*, sir, I should prescribe for you ”

I related to him a remark which a respectable friend had made to me upon the then state of government, when those who had been long in opposition had attained to power, as it was supposed, against the inclination of the sovereign. “You need not be uneasy,” said this gentleman, “about the king. He laughs at them all; he plays them one against another.” Johnson. “Do n’t think so, sir. The king is as much oppressed as a man can be. If he plays them one against another, he *wins* nothing.”

I had paid a visit to General Oglethorpe in the morning, and was told by him that Dr. Johnson saw company on Saturday evenings, and he would meet me at Johnson’s that night. When I mentioned this to Johnson, not doubting that it would please him, as he had a great value for Oglethorpe, the fretfulness of his disease[3] unexpectedly showed itself; his anger suddenly kindled, and he said, with vehemence, “Did not you tell him not to come? Am I to be *hunted* in this manner?” I satisfied him that I could not divine that the visit would not be convenient, and that I certainly could not take it upon me of my own accord to forbid the general.

I found Dr. Johnson in the evening in Mrs. Williams’s room, at tea and coffee with her and Mrs. Desmoulins, who were also both ill; it was a sad scene, and he was not in a very good humour. He said of a performance that had lately come out, “Sir, if you should search all the madhouses in England, you would not find ten men who would write so, and think it sense[4] ”

I was glad when General Oglethorpe’s arrival was announced, and we left the ladies. Dr. Johnson attended him in the parlour, and was as courteous as ever. The general said he was busy reading the writers of the middle age. Johnson said they were very curious. Oglethorpe. “The house of commons has usurped[5] the

[1] [When Johnson asserted so distinctly that he could not trace the cause of his antipathy to the Scotch, it may seem unjust to attribute to him any secret personal motive: but it is the essence of prejudice to be unconscious of its cause; and the Editor is convinced in his own mind that Johnson received in early life some serious injury or affront from the Scotch. If Johnson’s personal history during the years 1745 and 1746 were known, something would probably be found to account for this (as it now seems) absurd national aversion. —Ed.]

[2] [This can hardly have been the cause. Many of Johnson’s earliest associates were indeed “needy Scotch adventurers;” that is, there were poor scholars, indigent men of education and talent, who brought those articles to the London market, as Dr. Johnson himself had done. Such were Sheils, Stewart, Macbean, &c. But Johnson had no aversion to *these* men: on the contrary, he lived with them in familiar friendship, did them active kindnesses, and with Macbean (who seems to have been the survivor of his earliest friends) he continued in the kindest intercourse o his last hour.—Ed.]

[3] [Johnson evidently suspected that Boswell, with his usual officiousness, had invited Oglethorpe to this unseasonable visit. When Johnson chides his over-zealous friend for such intermeddling, Boswell, with easy self-complacency, can discover no cause for the reprimand but Johnson’s sickness or ill-humour.—Ed.]

[4] [The Editor suspects that “Annus Mirabilis; or, the Eventful Year 1782, an Historical Poem, by the Rev. W. Tasker, authour of the Warlike Genius of Britain,” (see *ante*, p. 204) is here meant.—Ed.]

[5] [What could General Oglethorpe mean by saying that “the house of commons had *usurped* the power of the nation’s money?” Since a house of commons has existed, has it not exercised the power of the nation’s money? Then when he says that “government was carried on by corrupt influence, instead of the inherent right of the king,” he must mean, if he means any thing, that the king ought to rule in his own exclusive right, and by his own despotic will, and without the aid or the control of parliament, whose assent to the measures of the crown must be obtained by *influence of some kind*, or anarchy must ensue. In short, if Mr. Boswell did not make an

power of the nation's money and used it tyrannically. Government is now carried on by corrupt influence, instead of the inherent right of the king." JOHNSON. "Sir, the want of inherent right in the king occasions all this disturbance. What we did at the revolution was necessary: but it broke our constitution[1]." OGLETHORPE. "My father did not think it necessary."

On Sunday, 23d March, I breakfasted with Dr. Johnson, who seemed much relieved, having taken opium the night before. He however protested against it, as a remedy that should be given with the utmost reluctance, and only in extreme necessity. I mentioned how commonly it was used in Turkey, and that therefore it could not be so pernicious as he apprehended He grew warm, and said, "Turks take opium, and Christians take opium; but Russel, in his account of Aleppo, tells us, that it is as disgraceful in Turkey to take too much opium, as it is with us to get drunk. Sir, it is amazing how things are exaggerated. A gentleman was lately telling in a company where I was present, that in France as soon as a man of fashion marries, he takes an opera girl into keeping; and this he mentioned as a general custom. 'Pray, sir,' said I, 'how many opera girls may there be?' He answered, 'About fourscore.' 'Well then, sir,' said I, 'you see there can be no more than fourscore men of fashion who can do this[2].'"

Mrs. Desmoulins made tea; and she and I talked before him upon a topick which he had once borne patiently from me when we were by ourselves,—his not complaining of the world, because he was not called to some great office, nor had attained to great wealth. He flew into a violent passion, I confess with some justice, and commanded us to have done. "Nobody," said he, "has a right to talk in that manner, to bring before a man his own character, and the events of his life, when he does not choose it should be done. I never have sought the world; the world was not to seek me. It is rather wonderful that so much has been done for me. All the complaints which are made of the world are unjust. I never knew a man of merit neglected: it was generally by his own fault that he failed of success. A man may hide his head in a hole: he may go into the country, and publish a book now and then, which nobody reads, and then complain he is neglected. There is no reason why any person should exert himself for a man who has written a good book: he has not written it for any individual. I may as well make a present to the postman who brings me a letter. When patronage was limited, an authour expected to find a Mæcenas, and complained if he did not find one. Why should he complain? This Mæcenas has others as good as he, or others who have got the start of him." BOSWELL. "But, surely, sir, you will allow that there are men of merit at the bar, who never get practice." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are sure that practice is got from an opinion that the person employed deserves it best; so that if a man of merit at the bar does not get practice, it is from errour, not from injustice. He is not neglected. A horse that is brought to market may not be bought, though he is a very good horse: but that is from ignorance, not from inattention."

There was in this discourse much novelty, ingenuity, and discrimination, such as is seldom to be found. Yet I cannot help thinking that men of merit, who have no success in life, may be forgiven for *lamenting*, if they are not allowed to *complain*. They may consider it as *hard* that their merit should not have its suitable distinction. Though there is no intentional injustice towards them on the part of the world, their merit not having been perceived, they may yet repine against *fortune*, or *fate*, or by whatever name they choose to call the supposed mythological power of *destiny*. It has, however, occurred to me, as a consolatory thought, that men of merit should consider thus:—How much harder would it be, if the same persons had both all the merit and all the prosperity? Would not this be a miserable distribution for the poor dunces? Would men of merit exchange their intellectual superiority, and the enjoyments arising from it, for external distinction and the pleasures of wealth? If they would not, let them not envy others, who are poor where they are rich, a compensation which is made to them. Let them look inwards and be satisfied; recollecting with conscious pride what Virgil finely says of

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erroneous note, General Oglethorpe talked nonsense, which indeed there is reason to suspect that this amiable and garrulous old gentleman sometimes did.—ED.]

[1] I have, in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," fully expressed my sentiments upon this subject. The revolution was *necessary*, but not a subject for *glory*; because it for a long time blasted the generous feelings of *loyalty*. And now, when by the benignant effect of time the present royal family are established in our *affections*, how unwise is it to revive by celebrations the memory of a shock, which it would surely have been better that our constitution had not required!—BOSWELL

[2] [Yes, but it may be doubted whether there were fourscore persons whom the society of Paris would admit to be strictly and *par excellence* men of fashion. The fact, thus expressed with colloquial latitude, was substantially true; one of these degrading connexions was considered essential to those who pretended to the title of a *man of fashion*.—ED.]

the *Corycius Senex*, and which I have, in another place [1], with truth and sincerity applied to Mr. Burke:

"Regum æquabat opes animis."
4 GEOR. I. 132.

On the subject of the right employment of wealth, Johnson observed, "A man cannot make a bad use of his money, so far as regards society, if he does not hoard it [2]; for if he either spends it or lends it out, society has the benefit. It is in general better to spend money than to give it away; for industry is more promoted by spending money than by giving it away. A man who spends his money is sure he is doing good with it: he is not so sure when he gives it away. A man who spends ten thousand a year will do more good than a man who spends two thousand and gives away eight."

In the evening I came to him again. He was somewhat fretful from his illness. A gentleman asked him whether he had been abroad to-day. "Do 'nt talk so childishly," said he. "You may as well ask if I hanged myself to-day." I mentioned politicks. JOHNSON. "Sir, I 'd as soon have a man to break my bones as talk to me of publick affairs, internal or external. I have lived to see things all as bad as they can be."

Having mentioned his friend, the second Lord Southwell, he said, "Lord Southwell was the highest-bred man without insolence, that I ever was in company with; the most *qualitied* I ever saw. Lord Orrery was not dignified; Lord Chesterfield was, but he was insolent. Lord ********* [3] is a man of coarse manners, but a man of abilities and information. I do n't say he is a man I would set at the head of a nation, though perhaps he may be as good as the next prime minister that comes; but he is a man to be at the head of a club,—I do n't say *our* CLUB,—for there 's no such club." BOSWELL. "But, sir, was he not a factious man?" JOHNSON. "O yes, sir, as factious a fellow as could be found; one who was for sinking us all into the mob." BOSWELL. "How then, sir, did he get into favour with the king?" JOHNSON. "Because, sir, I suppose he promised the king to do whatever the king pleased."

He said, "Goldsmith's blundering speech to Lord Shelburne, which has been so often mentioned, and which he really did make to him, was only a blunder in emphasis:—'I wonder they should call your lordship *Malagrida*, for Malagrida was a very good man;'—meant, I wonder they should use *Malagrida* as a term of reproach [4]."

Soon after this time I had an opportunity of seeing, by means of one of his friends, a proof that his talents, as well as his obliging service to authours, were ready as ever. He had revised "The Village," an admirable poem, by the Reverend Mr Crabbe. [5] Its sentiments as to the false notions of rustick happiness and rustick virtue were quite congenial with his own; and he had taken the trouble not only to suggest slight corrections and variations, but to furnish some lines when he thought he could give the writer's meaning better than in the words of the manuscript [6].

On Sunday, March 30, I found him at home in the evening, and had the pleasure to meet with Dr. Brocklesby, whose reading, and knowledge of life, and good spirits, supply him with a never-failing source of conversation. He mentioned a respectable gentleman, who became extremely penurious near the close of his life. Johnson said there must have been a degree of madness

Letter to the People of Scotland against the Attempt to diminish the Number of the Lords of Session, 1785.

[2] [This surely is too broadly stated;—society is injured when money is spent in profligacy or corruption, or (as in the case of the *Egalité* Duke of Orleans) in exciting political sedition.—ED.]

[3] [Shelburne, the second Earl, afterwards first Marquis of Lansdowne.—ED.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 226.—ED.]

[5] [This amiable gentleman is still alive, resident in his rectory of Trowbridge, in Wiltshire. His subsequent publications have placed him high in the roll of British poets—though his having taken a view of life too minute, too humiliating, too painful, and too just, may have deprived his works of so extensive, or, at least, so brilliant, a popularity as some of his contemporaries have attained; but the Editor ventures to believe, that there is no poet of his times who will stand higher in the opinion of posterity. He generally deals with "the short and simple annals of the poor," but he exhibits them with such a deep knowledge of human nature,—with such general ease and simplicity, and such accurate force of expression, whether gay or pathetical, as, in the Editor's humble judgment, no poet, except Shakspeare, has excelled.—ED.]

[6] I shall give an instance, marking the original by Roman, and Johnson's substitution in Italick characters:

"In fairer scenes, where peaceful pleasures spring,
Tityrus, the pride of Mantuan swains, might sing;
But charm'd by him, or smitten with his views,
Shall modern poets court the Mantuan muse?
From truth and nature shall we widely stray,
Where fancy leads, or Virgil led the way?

On Mincio's banks, in Cæsar's bounteous reign,
If Tityrus found the golden age again,
Must sleepy bards the flattering dream prolong,
Mechanick echoes of the Mantuan song?
From truth and nature shall we widely stray,
Where Virgil, not where fancy, leads the way?"

Here we find Johnson's poetical and critical powers undiminished. I must, however, observe, that the aids he gave to this poem, as to "The Traveller" and "Deserted Village" of Goldsmith, were so small as by no means to impair the distinguished merit of the authour.—BOSWELL.

about him. "Not at all, sir," said Dr. Brocklesby, "his judgment was entire." Unluckily, however, he mentioned that although he had a fortune of twenty-seven thousand pounds, he denied himself many comforts, from an apprehension that he could not afford them. "Nay, sir," cried Johnson, "when the judgment is so disturbed that a man cannot count, that is pretty well."

I shall here insert a few of Johnson's sayings, without the formality of dates, as they have no reference to any particular time or place.

"The more a man extends and varies his acquaintance the better." This, however, was meant with a just restriction; for he on another occasion said to me, "Sir, a man may be so much of every thing, that he is nothing of any thing."

"Raising the wages of day-labourers is wrong; for it does not make them live better, but only makes them idler, and idleness is a very bad thing for human nature."

"It is a very good custom to keep a journal for a man's own use; he may write upon a card a day all that is necessary to be written, after he has had experience of life. At first there is a great deal to be written, because there is a great deal of novelty; but when once a man has settled his opinions, there is seldom much to be set down."

"There is nothing wonderful in the Journal[1] which we see Swift kept in London, for it contains slight topicks, and it might soon be written."

I praised the accuracy of an account-book of a lady whom I mentioned. JOHNSON. "Keeping accounts, sir, is of no use when a man is spending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat less beef to-day, because you have written down what it cost yesterday." I mentioned another lady who thought as he did, so that her husband could not get her to keep an account of the expense of the family, as she thought it enough that she never exceeded the sum allowed her. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is fit she should keep an account, because her husband wishes it; but I do not see its use." I maintained that keeping an account has this advantage, that it satisfies a man that his money has not been lost or stolen, which he might sometimes be apt to imagine, were there no written state of his expense; and, besides, a calculation of economy, so as not to exceed one's income, cannot be made without a view of the different articles in figures, that one may see how to retrench in some particulars less necessary than others. This he did not attempt to answer.

Talking of an acquaintance of ours, whose narratives, which abounded in curious and interesting topicks, were unhappily found to be very fabulous; I mentioned Lord Mansfield's having said to me, "Suppose we believe one *half* of what he tells." JOHNSON. "Ay; but we don't know *which* half to believe. By his lying we lose not only our reverence for him, but all comfort in his conversation." BOSWELL. "May we not take it as amusing fiction?" JOHNSON. "Sir, the misfortune is, that you will insensibly believe as much of it as you incline to believe."

It is remarkable, that notwithstanding their congeniality in politicks, he never was acquainted with a late eminent noble judge[2], whom I have heard speak of him as a writer with great respect. Johnson, I know not upon what degree of investigation, entertained no exalted opinion of his lordship's intellectual character. Talking of him to me one day, he said, "It is wonderful, sir, with how little real superiority of mind men can make an eminent figure in publick life." He expressed himself to the same purpose concerning another law-lord[3], who, it seems, once took a fancy to associate with the wits of London; but with so little success, that Foote said, "What can he mean by coming among us? He is not only dull himself, but the cause of dulness in others." Trying him by the test of his colloquial powers, Johnson had found him very defective. He once said to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "This man now has been ten years about town, and has made nothing of it;" meaning as a companion[4]. He said to

[1] In his Life of Swift, he thus speaks of this Journal: "In the midst of his power and his politics, he kept a journal of his visits, his walks, his interviews with ministers, and quarrels with his servant, and transmitted it to Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley, to whom he knew that whatever befel him was interesting, and no account could be too minute. Whether these diurnal trifles were properly exposed to eyes which had never received any pleasure from the dean, may be reasonably doubted: they have, however, some odd attractions: the reader finding frequent mention of names which he has been used to consider as important, goes on in hope of information; and, as there is nothing to fatigue attention, if he is disappointed, he can hardly complain." It may be added, that the reader not only hopes to find, but does find, in this very entertaining Journal, much curious information, respecting persons and things, which he will in vain seek for in other books of the same period.—MALONE.

[2] [No doubt Lord Mansfield. See *ante*, v. i. p. 285.—ED.]

[3] [Probably Lord Loughborough.—ED.]

[4] Knowing as well as I do what precision and elegance of oratory his lordship can display, I cannot but suspect that his unfavourable appearance in a social circle, which drew such animadversions upon him, must be owing to a cold affectation of consequence, from being reserved and stiff. If it be so, and he might be an agreeable

me, "I never heard any thing from him in company that was at all striking; and depend upon it, sir, it is when you come close to a man in conversation, that you discover what his real abilities are: to make a speech in a publick assembly is a knack. Now, I honour Thurlow, sir; Thurlow is a fine fellow; he fairly puts his mind to yours."

After repeating to him some of his pointed, lively sayings, I said, "It is a pity, sir, you don't always remember your own good things, that you may have a laugh when you will." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, it is better that I forget them, that I may be reminded of them, and have a laugh on their being brought to my recollection."

When I recalled to him his having said, as we sailed up Lochlomond, "That if he wore any thing fine, it should be *very* fine;" I observed that all his thoughts were upon a great scale. JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, every man will have as fine a thing as he can get; as large a diamond for his ring." BOSWELL. "Pardon me, sir: a man of a narrow mind will not think of it; a slight trinket will satisfy him:

'Nec sufferre queat majoris pondera gemmæ.'"
JUV. 1 SAT. 29.

I told him I should send him some "Essays" which I had written [1], which I hoped he would be so good as to read, and pick out the good ones. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, send me only the good ones: don't make *me* pick them."

I heard him once say, "Though the proverb '*Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia*,' does not always prove true, we may be certain of the converse of it, *Nullum numen adest, si sit imprudentia* [2]."

Once, when Mr. Seward was going to Bath, and asked his commands, he said, "Tell Dr. Harington that I wish he would publish another volume of the '*Nugæ Antiquæ* [3];' it is a very pretty book [4]." Mr. Seward seconded this wish, and recommended to Dr. Harington to dedicate it to Johnson, and take for his motto what Catullus says to Cornelius Nepos:

"——————namque tu solebas
Meas esse aliquid putare NUGAS."

As a small proof of his kindliness and delicacy of feeling, the following circumstance may be mentioned: One evening, when we were in the street together, and I told him I was going to sup at Mr. Beauclerk's, he said, "I'll go with you." After having walked part of the way, seeming to recollect something, he suddenly stopped and said, "I cannot go,—but *I do not love Beauclerk the less.*"

On the frame of his portrait Mr. Beauclerk had inscribed

"——————Ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore [5]."

After Mr. Beauclerk's death, when it became Mr. Langton's property, he made the inscription be defaced. Johnson said complacently, "It was kind in you to take it off;" and then, after a short pause, added, "and not unkind in him to put it on."

He said, "How few of his friends' houses would a man choose to be at when he is sick!" He mentioned one or two. I recollect only Thrale's.

He observed, "There is a wicked inclination in most people to suppose an old man decayed in his intellects. If a young or middle-aged man, when leaving a company, does not recollect where he laid his hat, it is nothing; but if the same inattention is discovered in an old man, people will shrug up their shoulders, and say, 'His memory is going.'"

When I once talked to him of some of the sayings which every body repeats, but nobody knows where to find, such as *Quos* DEUS *vult perdere, prius dementat;* he told me that he was once offered ten guineas to point out from whence *Semel insanivimus omnes* was taken. He could not do it, but many years afterwards met with it by chance in *Johannes Baptista Mantuanus* [6].

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man if he would, we cannot be sorry that he misses his aim.—BOSWELL.

[1] Under the title of "The Hypochondriack."—MALONE.

[They are to be found in the London Magazine from 1775 to 1784.—ED.]

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi gives a more classical version of Johnson's variation: "Nullum numen adest ni sit prudentia." *Ante*, p. 119.—ED.]

[3] It has since appeared.—BOSWELL. [Though the MSS., of which this work was composed, had descended to Dr. Harington, the work was not edited by him, but by the Reverend Henry Harington, M. A.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

[4] A new and greatly improved edition of this very curious collection was published by Mr. Park in 1804, in two volumes, octavo. In this edition the letters are chronologically arranged, and the account of the bishops, which was formerly printed from a very corrupt copy, is taken from Sir John Harington's original manuscript, which he presented to Henry, Prince of Wales, and is now in the royal library in the museum.—MALONE.

[5] [The whole passage is very descriptive of Johnson:

"——Iracundior est paulo: minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum: rideri possit eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit: et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret: at est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam: at tibi amicus: at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."—*Hor. Sat.* iii. lib. i. 27
ED.]

[6] The words occur (as Mr. Bindley observes to me) in the first Eclogue of Mantuanus, "De Honesto Amore," &c.

"Id commune malum; semel insanivimus omnes"

I am very sorry that I did not take a note of an eloquent argument, in which he maintained that the situation of Prince of Wales was the happiest of any person's in the kingdom, even beyond that of the sovereign. I recollect only—the enjoyment of hope—the high superiority of rank, without the anxious cares of government—and a great degree of power, both from natural influence wisely used, and from the sanguine expectations of those who look forward to the chance of future favour.

Sir Joshua Reynolds communicated to me the following particulars:

Johnson thought the poems published as translations from Ossian had so little merit, that he said, "Sir, a man might write such stuff forever, if he would *abandon* his mind to it"

He said, "A man should pass a part of his time with *the laughers*, by which means any thing ridiculous or particular about him might be presented to his view, and corrected." I observed, he must have been a bold laugher who would have ventured to tell Dr. Johnson of any of his peculiarities[1].

Having observed the vain ostentatious importance of many people in quoting the authority of dukes and lords, as having been in their company, he said, he went to the other extreme, and did not mention his authority when he should have done it, had it not been that of a duke or a lord.

Dr. Goldsmith said once to Dr. Johnson that he wished for some additional members to the Literary Club, to give it an agreeable variety; "for," said he, "there can now be nothing new among us: we have travelled over one another's minds." Johnson seemed a little angry, and said, "Sir, you have not travelled over *my* mind, I promise you." Sir Joshua, however, thought Goldsmith right; observing, that "when people have lived a great deal together, they know what each of them will say on every subject. A new understanding, therefore, is desirable; because though it may only furnish the same sense upon a question which would have been furnished by those with whom we are accustomed to live, yet this sense will have a different colouring; and colouring is of much effect in every thing else as well as in painting."

Johnson used to say that he made it a constant rule to talk as well as he could, both as to sentiment and expression; by which means, what had been originally effort became familiar and easy. The consequence of this, Sir Joshua observed, was, that his common conversation in all companies was such as to secure him universal attention, as something above the usual colloquial style was expected.

Yet, though Johnson had this habit in company, when another mode was necessary, in order to investigate truth, he could descend to a language intelligible to the meanest capacity. An instance of this was witnessed by Sir Joshua Reynolds, when they were present at an examination of a

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With the following elucidation of the other saying—*Quos Deus* (it should rather be, *Quem Jupiter*) *vult perdere, prius dementat*—Mr. Boswell was furnished by Mr. Richard How, of Aspley, in Bedfordshire, as communicated to that gentleman by his friend, Mr. John Pitts, late rector of Great Brickhill in Buckinghamshire: "Perhaps no scrap of Latin whatever has been more quoted than this. It occasionally falls even from those who are scrupulous even to pedantry in their Latinity, and will not admit a word into their compositions which has not the sanction of the first age." The word *demento* is of no authority, either as a verb active or neuter. After a long search, for the purpose of deciding a bet, some gentlemen of Cambridge found it among the fragments of Euripides, in what edition I do not recollect, where it is given as a translation of a Greek Iambick:

Ον Θεος θελει απολεσαι, πρωτ' αποφρενας.

"The above scrap was found in the hand-writing of a suicide of fashion, Sir D. O., some years ago, lying on the table of the room where he had destroyed himself. The suicide was a man of classical acquirements: he left no other paper behind him." Another of these proverbial sayings,

"Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim,"

I, some years ago, in a note on a passage in The Merchant of Venice, traced to its source. It occurs (with a slight variation) in the Alexandreis of Philip Gualtier (a poet of the thirteenth century), which was printed at Lyons in 1558. Darius is the person addressed:

"——— Quo tendis inertem,
Rex periture, fugam? nescis, heu! perdite, nescis
Quem fugias: hostes incurris dum fugis hostem;
Incidis in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim."

The authour of this line was first ascertained by Galleottus Martius, who died in 1476, as is observed in Menagiana, vol. iii. p. 130, edit. 1762. For an account of Philip Gualtier, see Nossius de Poet. Latin., p. 254, fol. 1697. A line, not less frequently quoted than any of the preceding, was suggested for inquiry, several years ago, in a note on The Rape of Lucrece:

"Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris."

But the authour of this verse has not, I believe, been discovered.—MALONE.

[1] I am happy, however, to mention a pleasing instance of his enduring with great gentleness to hear one of his most striking particularities pointed out: Miss Hunter, a niece of his friend, Christopher Smart, when a very young girl, struck by his extraordinary motions, said to him, "Pray, Dr. Johnson, why do you make such strange gestures?" "From bad habit," he replied. "Do you, my dear, take care to guard against bad habits." This I was told by the young lady's brother at Margate.—BOSWELL.

little blackguard boy, by Mr. Saunders Welch, the late Westminster justice. Welch, who imagined that he was exalting himself in Dr. Johnson's eyes by using big words, spoke in a manner that was utterly unintelligible to the boy; Dr. Johnson perceiving it, addressed himself to the boy, and changed the pompous phraseology into colloquial language. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was much amused by this proceeding, which seemed a kind of reversing of what might have been expected from the two men, took notice of it to Dr. Johnson, as they walked away by themselves. Johnson said, that it was continually the case; and that he was always obliged to *translate* the justice's swelling diction (smiling), so as that his meaning might be understood by the vulgar, from whom information was to be obtained.

Sir Joshua once observed to him, that he had talked above the capacity of some people with whom they had been in company together. "No matter, sir," said Johnson; "they consider it as a compliment to be talked to as if they were wiser than they are. So true is this, sir, that Baxter made it a rule in every sermon that he preached to say something that was above the capacity of his audience[1]."

Johnson's dexterity in retort, when he seemed to be driven to an extremity by his adversary, was very remarkable. Of his power, in this respect, our common friend, Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, has been pleased to furnish me with an eminent instance. However unfavourable to Scotland, he uniformly gave liberal praise to George Buchanan, as a writer. In a conversation concerning the literary merits of the two countries, in which Buchanan was introduced, a Scotchman, imagining that on this ground he should have an undoubted triumph over him, exclaimed, "Ah, Dr. Johnson, what would you have said of Buchanan had he been an Englishman?" "Why, sir," said Johnson, after a little pause, "I should *not* have said of Buchanan, had he been an *Englishman*, what I will now say of him as *Scotchman*,—that he was the only man of genius his country ever produced[2]."

And this brings to my recollection another instance of the same nature. I once reminded him that when Dr. Adam Smith was expatiating on the beauty of Glasgow, he had cut him short by saying, "Pray, sir, have you ever seen Brentford?" and I took the liberty to add, "My dear sir, surely that was *shocking*." "Why then, sir," he replied, "you have never seen Brentford."

[When his friend Mr. Strahan, a native of Scotland, at his return from the Hebrides asked him, with a firm tone of voice, what he thought of his country? "That it is a very vile country to be sure, sir;" returned for answer Dr. Johnson. "Well, sir!" replies the other somewhat mortified, "God made it." "Certainly he did," answers Dr. Johnson again; "but we must always remember that he made it for Scotchmen, and comparisons are odious, Mr. Strahan; but God made hell."] Piozzi Anec. p. 133.

Though his usual phrase for conversation was *talk*, yet he made a distinction; for when he once told me that he dined the day before at a friend's house, with "a very pretty company;" and I asked him if there was good conversation, he answered, "No, sir; we had *talk* enough, but no *conversation;* there was nothing *discussed.*"

Talking of the success of the Scotch in London, he imputed it in a considerable degree to their spirit of nationality. "You know, sir," said he, "that no Scotchman publishes a book, or has a play brought upon the stage, but there are five hundred people ready to applaud him."

He gave much praise to his friend Dr Burney's elegant and entertaining Travels, and told Mr. Seward that he had them in his eye when writing his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland."

Such was his sensibility, and so much was he affected by pathetick poetry, that, when he was reading Dr. Beattie's "Her

[1] The justness of this remark is confirmed by the following story, for which I am indebted to Lord Eliot:—A country parson, who was remarkable for quoting scraps of Latin in his sermons, having died, one of his parishioners was asked how he liked his successor: "He is a very good preacher," was his answer, "but no *Latiner.*" —Boswell. [Mr. Chalmers makes this anecdote interesting by giving it "a local habitation and a name." This "very good preacher" was, he says, the celebrated Dr. Edward Pocock, who had a living at Childry, near Oxford. One of his Oxford friends, as he travelled through Childry, inquiring, for his diversion, of some people, who was their minister? and how they liked him? received from them this answer: "Our parson is one Mr. Pocock, a plain, honest man; but, master," said they, "he is no *Latiner.*"—*Pocock's Life*, sect. iii.—Ed.]

[2] This prompt and sarcastic retort may not unaptly be compared with Sir Henry Wotton's celebrated answer to a priest in Italy, who asked him "Where was your religion to be found before Luther?" "My religion was to be found then, where yours is not to be found now, in the written word of God." But Johnson's admirable reply has a sharper edge and perhaps more ingenuity than that of Wotton.—Malone. [In Selden's *Table Talk* we have the following more witty reply made to this same question: "Where was America an hundred or six score years ago?"—J. H. Markland.]

mit," in my presence, it brought tears into his eyes[1].

He disapproved much of mingling real facts with fiction. On this account he censured a book entitled "Love and Madness[2]."

Mr. Hoole told him he was born in Moorfields, and had received part of his early instruction in Grub-street. "Sir," said Johnson, smiling, "you have been *regularly* educated." Having asked who was his instructor, and Mr. Hoole having answered, "My uncle, sir, who was a tailor;" Johnson, recollecting himself, said, "Sir, I knew him: we called him the *metaphysical tailor*. He was of a club in Old-street, with me and George Psalmanazar, and some others: but pray, sir, was he a good tailor?" Mr. Hoole having answered that he believed he was too mathematical, and used to draw squares and triangles on his shopboard, so that he did not excel in the cut of a coat,—"I am sorry for it," said Johnson, "for I would have every man to be master of his own business."

Hawk. p. 547. [This probably was the person to whom the following anecdote, told by Sir J. Hawkins, relates. Johnson would frequently adjourn with Psalmanazar from his lodgings to a neighbouring alehouse, and, in the common room, converse with him on subjects of importance. In one of these conversations, Johnson took occasion to remark on the human mind, that it had a necessary tendency to improvement, and that it would frequently anticipate instruction, and enable ingenious minds to acquire knowledge. "Sir," said a stranger that overheard him, "that I deny: I am a tailor, and have had many apprentices, but never one that could make a coat till I had taken great pains in teaching him."]

In pleasant reference to himself and Mr. Hoole, as brother authours, he often said, "Let you and I, sir, go together, and eat a beef-steak in Grub-street."

Sir William Chambers, that great architect, whose works show a sublimity[3] of genius, and who is esteemed by all who knew him, for his social, hospitable, and generous qualities, submitted the manuscript of his "Chinese Architecture" to Dr. Johnson's perusal. Johnson was much pleased with it, and said, "It wants no addition nor correction, but a few lines of introduction," which he furnished, and Sir William adopted[4].

He said to Sir William Scott, "The age is running mad after innovation; and all the business of the world is to be done in a new way; men are to be hanged in a new way; Tyburn itself is not safe from the fury of innovation." It having been argued that this was an improvement,—"No, sir," said he, eagerly, "it is *not* an improvement; they object, that the old method drew together a number of spectators. Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators, they don't answer their purpose. The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the publick was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by it[5]. Why is all this to be swept away?" I perfectly agree with Dr. Johnson upon this head, and am persuaded that executions now, the solemn procession being discontinued, have not nearly the effect which they formerly had. Magistrates, both in London and elsewhere, have, I am afraid, in this had too much regard to their own ease.

Of Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester Johnson said to a friend,—"Hurd, sir, is one of a set of men who account for every thing systematically; for instance, it has been a fashion to wear scarlet breeches; these men would tell you, that according to causes and effects, no other wear could at that time have been chosen." He, however,

[1] The particular passage which excited this strong emotion was, as I have heard from my father, the third stanza, "'Tis night,"—&c.—J. Boswell. [It is the *fourth* stanza.—J. H. Markland.

[2] [A kind of novel founded on the story of Mr. Hackman and Miss Ray, see p. 208 of the present volume.—Ed.]

[3] ['The Editor does not recollect any work of Sir W. Chambers which can be said to exhibit '*sublimity of genius*."—Ed.]

[4] The Honourable Horace Walpole, now Earl of Orford, thus bears testimony to this gentleman's merit as a writer: "Mr. Chambers's 'Treatise on Civil Architecture' is the most sensible book, and the most exempt from prejudices, that ever was written on that science."—Preface to *Anecdotes of Painting in England*. The introductory lines are these: "It is difficult to avoid praising too little or too much. The boundless panegyricks which have been lavished upon the Chinese learning, policy, and arts, show with what power novelty attracts regard, and how naturally esteem swells into admiration.

"I am far from desiring to be numbered among the exaggerators of Chinese excellence. I consider them as great, or wise, only in comparison with the nations that surround them; and have no intention to place them in competition either with the ancients or with the moderns of this part of the world; yet they must be allowed to claim our notice as a distinct and very singular race of men; as the inhabitants of a region divided by its situation from all civilized countries, who have formed their own manners, and invented their own arts, without the assistance of example."—Boswell.

[5] [What could Dr. Johnson have meant by saying, that the criminal was *supported by a publick procession*? The reverse is obviously the truth. It must be recollected that Boswell had the mania of witnessing executions.—Ed.]

said of him at another time to the same gentleman, "Hurd, sir, is a man whose acquaintance is a valuable acquisition."

That learned and ingenious prelate, it is well known, published at one period of his life "Moral and Political Dialogues," with a woefully whiggish cast. Afterwards, his lordship having thought better, came to see his error, and republished the work with a more constitutional spirit. Johnson, however, was unwilling to allow him full credit for his political conversion. I remember when his lordship declined the honour of being the archbishop of Canterbury, Johnson said, "I am glad he did not go to Lambeth; for, after all, I fear he is a whig in his heart."

Johnson's attention to precision and clearness in expression was very remarkable. He disapproved of a parenthesis; and I believe in all his voluminous writings, not half a dozen of them will be found. He never used the phrases *the former* and *the latter*, having observed, that they often occasioned obscurity; he therefore contrived to construct his sentences so as not to have occasion for them, and would even rather repeat the same words, in order to avoid them. Nothing is more common than to mistake surnames, when we hear them carelessly uttered for the first time. To prevent this, he used not only to pronounce them slowly and distinctly, but to take the trouble of spelling them; a practice which I have often followed, and which I wish were general.

Such was the heat and irritability of his blood, that not only did he pare his nails to the quick, but scraped the joints of his fingers with a penknife, till they seemed quite red and raw [1].

The heterogeneous composition of human nature was remarkably exemplified in Johnson. His liberality in giving his money to persons in distress was extraordinary. Yet there lurked about him a propensity to paltry saving. One day I owned to him, that "I was occasionally troubled with a fit of *narrowness*." "Why, sir," said he, "so am I. *But I do not tell it.*" He has now and then borrowed a shilling of me; and when I asked him for it again, seemed to be rather out of humour. A droll little circumstance once occurred; as if he meant to reprimand my minute exactness as a creditor, he thus addressed me;—"Boswell, *lend* me sixpence—*not to be repaid.*"

This great man's attention to small things was very remarkable. As an instance of it, he one day said to me, "Sir, when you get silver in change for a guinea, look carefully at it; you may find some curious piece of coin."

Though a stern *true-born Englishman*, and fully prejudiced against all other nations, he had discernment enough to see, and candour enough to censure, the cold reserve too common among Englishmen towards strangers: "Sir," said he, "two men of any other nation who are shown into a room together, at a house where they are both visitors, will immediately find some conversation. But two Englishmen will probably go each to a different window, and remain in obstinate silence. Sir, we as yet do not enough understand the common rights of humanity."

Johnson was at a certain period of his life a good deal with the Earl of Shelburne [2], now Marquis of Lansdown, as he doubtless could not but have a due value for that nobleman's activity of mind, and uncommon acquisitions of important knowledge, however much he might disapprove of other parts of his lordship's character, which were widely different from his own.

Maurice Morgann, Esq., authour of the very ingenious "Essay on the Character of Falstaff [3]," being a particular friend of his lordship, had once an opportunity of entertaining Johnson a day or two at Wycombe, when its lord was absent, and by him I have been favoured with two anecdotes.

One is not a little to the credit of Johnson's candour. Mr. Morgann and he had a dispute pretty late at night, in which Johnson would not give up, though he had the wrong side; and, in short, both kept the field. Next morning, when they met in the breakfasting-room, Dr. Johnson accosted Mr. Morgann thus: "Sir, I have been thinking on our dispute last night;—*You were in the right.*"

The other was as follows: Johnson, for sport perhaps, or from the spirit of contradiction, eagerly maintained that Derrick had merit as a writer. Mr. Morgann argued with him directly, in vain. At length he had recourse to this device. "Pray, sir," said he, "whether do you reckon Derrick or Smart the best poet?" Johnson at once felt himself roused; and

[1] [This looks like what Mr. Partridge would call a *non sequitur;* at least, the Editor does not see how extreme heat and irritability of the blood should cause a man to pare his nails too close.—Ed.]

[2] [The accuracy of this assertion seems doubtful; at which period of his life could Johnson "*have been a good deal with Lord Shelburne?*" words that imply a familiar intercourse: of which neither in Mr. Boswell's detail of his life, nor in his letters, does any trace appear. See *ante*, p. 158, *note*.—Ed.]

[3] Johnson being asked his opinion of this Essay, answered, "Why, sir, we shall have the man come forth again; and as he has proved Falstaff to be no coward, he may prove Iago to be a very good character."—Boswell.

nswered, "Sir, there is no settling the oint of precedency between a louse and a flea."

[It has been asserted (*European Mag.* 1796, p. 16), that the foregoing comparison was made, not between Derrick and *Smart*, but between Derrick and *Boyce*, a person] Piozzi Anec. p. 92. [of whose ingenuity and distress Johnson told some curious anecdotes; particularly that when he was almost perishing with hunger, and some money was produced to purchase him a dinner, he got a bit of roast beef, but could not eat it without ketchup, and laid out the last half-guinea he possessed in truffles and mushrooms, eating them in bed too, for want of clothes, or even a shirt to sit up in.]

Once, when checking my boasting too frequently of myself in company, he said to me, "Boswell, you often vaunt so much as to provoke ridicule. You put me in mind of a man who was standing in the kitchen of an inn with his back to the fire, and thus accosted the person next him. 'Do you know, sir, who I am?' 'No, sir,' said the other, 'I have not that advantage.' 'Sir,' said he, 'I am the *great* Twalmley, who invented the New Floodgate Iron[1].'" The Bishop of Killaloe, on my repeating the story to him, defended Twalmley, by observing that he was entitled to the epithet of *great;* for Virgil in his group of worthies in the Elysian fields—

Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi, &c.
ÆN. 6. v. 660.

mentions

Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes.
v. 663.

He was pleased to say to me one morning when we were left alone in his study, "Boswell, I think I am easier with you than with almost any body."

He would not allow Mr. David Hume any credit for his political principles, though similar to his own; saying of him, "Sir, he was a tory by chance."

His acute observation of human life made him remark, "Sir, there is nothing by which a man exasperates most people more than by displaying a superior ability of brilliancy in conversation. They seem pleased at the time; but their envy makes them curse him at their hearts[2]."

My readers will probably be surprised to hear that the great Dr. Johnson could amuse himself with so slight and playful a species of composition as a *charade*. I have recovered one which he made on Dr. Barnard, now Lord Bishop of Killaloe; who has been pleased for many years to treat me with so much intimacy and social ease, that I may presume to call him not only my right reverend, but my very dear friend. I therefore with peculiar pleasure give to the world a just and elegant compliment thus paid to his lordship by Johnson.

CHARADE.

"My *first*[3] shuts out thieves from your house or your room,
My *second*[4] expresses a Syrian perfume.
My *whole*[5] is a man in whose converse is shared
The strength of a Bar and the sweetness of Nard."

Johnson asked Richard Owen Cambridge, Esq. if he had read the Spanish translation of Sallust, said to be written by a prince of Spain, with the assistance of his tutor, who is professedly the authour of a treatise annexed, on the Phœnician language.

Mr. Cambridge commended the work, particularly as he thought the translator understood his authour better than is commonly the case with translators; but said, he was disappointed in the purpose for which he borrowed the book; to see whether a Spaniard could be better furnished with inscriptions from monuments, coins, or other antiquities, which he might more probably find on a coast so immediately opposite to Carthage, than the antiquaries of any other countries. JOHNSON. "I am very sorry you were not gratified in your expectations." CAMBRIDGE. "The language would have been of little use, as there is no history existing in that tongue to balance the partial accounts which the Roman writers have left us." JOHNSON. "No, sir. They have not been *partial*, they have told their own story without shame or regard to equitable treatment of their injured enemy; they had no compunction, no feeling for a Carthaginian. Why, sir, they would never have borne Virgil's description of Eneas's treatment of Dido, if she had not been a Carthaginian."

I gratefully acknowledge this and other communications from Mr. Cambridge, whom, if a beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames, a few miles distant from London, a numerous and excellent library, which he accurately knows and reads, a choice collection of pictures, which he understands and relishes, an easy fortune, an amiable family, an extensive circle of friends and acquaintance, distinguished by rank, fashion, and genius, a literary fame, various, elegant, and still increasing, colloquial talents rarely to be found, and, with all these means of happiness, enjoying, when well

[1] What the *great* Twalmley was so proud of having invented was neither more nor less than a kind of box-iron for smoothing linen.—BOSWELL.

[2] [This may be doubted. Johnson himself was, as we have seen, sometimes envious of the brilliancy of his friends; but, in general, surely persons of a brilliant conversation (if it be not sarcastic) are rather popular.—ED.

[3] Bar. [4] Nard. [5] Barnard

advanced in years, health and vigour of body, serenity and animation of mind, do not entitle to be addressed *fortunate senex!* I know not to whom, in any age, that expression could with propriety have been used. Long may he live to hear and to feel it[1]!

Johnson's love of little children, which he discovered upon all occasions, calling them "pretty dears," and giving them sweetmeats, was an undoubted proof of the real humanity and gentleness of his disposition[2].

His uncommon kindness to his servants, and serious concern, not only for their comfort in this world, but their happiness in the next, was another unquestionable evidence of what all, who were intimately acquainted with him, knew to be true.

Nor would it be just, under this head, to omit the fondness which he showed for animals which he had taken under his protection. I never shall forget the indulgence with which he treated Hodge, his cat; for whom he himself used to go out and buy oysters, lest the servants, having that trouble, should take a dislike to the poor creature. I am, unluckily, one of those who have an antipathy to a cat, so that I am uneasy when in the room with one; and I own I frequently suffered a good deal from the presence of this same Hodge. I recollect him one day scrambling up Dr. Johnson's breast, apparently with much satisfaction, while my friend, smiling and half-whistling, rubbed down his back, and pulled him by the tail; and when I observed he was a fine cat, saying, "Why, yes, sir, but I have had cats whom I liked better than this;" and then, as if perceiving Hodge to be out of countenance, adding, "But he is a very fine cat, a very fine cat indeed."

This reminds me of the ludicrous account which he gave Mr. Langton of the despicable state of a young gentleman of good family. "Sir, when I heard of him last, he was running about town shooting cats." And then, in a sort of kindly reverie, he bethought himself of his own favourite cat, and said, "But Hodge sha n't be shot; no, no, Hodge shall not be shot."

He thought Mr. Beauclerk made a shrewd and judicious remark to Mr. Langton, who, after having been for the first time in company with a well-known wit about town, was warmly admiring and praising him,—"See him again," said Beauclerk.

His respect for the hierarchy, and particularly the dignitaries of the church, has been more than once exhibited in the course of this work. Mr. Seward saw him presented to the Archbishop of York, and described his *bow to an* ARCHBISHOP as such a studied elaboration of homage, such an extension of limb, such a flexion of body, as have seldom or ever been equalled.

I cannot help mentioning with much regret, that by my own negligence I lost an opportunity of having the history of my family from its founder, Thomas Boswell, in 1504, recorded and illustrated by Johnson's pen. Such was his goodness to me, that when I presumed to solicit him for so great a favour, he was pleased to say, "Let me have all the materials you can collect, and I will do it both in Latin and English; then let it be printed, and copies of it be deposited in various places for security and preservation." I can now only do the best I can to make up for this loss, keeping my great master steadily in view. Family histories, like the *imagines majorum* of the ancients, excite to virtue; and I wish that they who really have blood, would be more careful to trace and ascertain its course. Some have affected to laugh at the history of the house of Yvery[3]: it would be well if many others would transmit their pedigrees to posterity, with the same accuracy and generous zeal with which the noble lord who compiled that work has honoured and perpetuated his ancestry.

On Thursday, April 10, I introduced to him, at his house in Bolt-court, the Honourable and Reverend William Stuart[4], son of the Earl of Bute; a gentleman truly worthy of being known to Johnson; being, with all the advantages of high birth, learning, travel, and elegant manners, an exemplary parish priest in every respect.

After some compliments on both sides, the tour which Johnson and I had made to the Hebrides was mentioned. JOHNSON. "I got an acquisition of more ideas by it than by any thing that I remember. I saw quite a different system of life." BOSWELL "You would not like to make the same journey again?" JOHNSON. "Why no, sir; not the same: it is a tale told. Gravina, an Italian critick, observes, that every man desires to see that of which he has read, but no man desires to read an account of what he has seen: so much does description fall short of reality. Description only excites curiosity; seeing satisfies it. Other

[1] Mr Cambridge enjoyed all the blessings here enumerated for many years after this passage was written. He died at his seat near Twickenham, Sept. 17, 1802, in his eighty-sixth year.—MALONE.

[2] [See *ante*, p. 59, where Johnson gives a less amiable account of himself.—ED.]

[3] Written by John, Earl of Egmont, and printed (but not published) in 1764.—MALONE.

[4] At that time vicar of Luton, in Bedfordshire, where he lived for some years, and fully merited the character given of him in the text; he was afterwards Lord Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland—MALONE: [and died May 1822, in a very strange way, having had poison by mistake for medicine, administered to him by the hand of his lady.—ED.]

people may go and see the Hebrides." BOSWELL. "I should wish to go and see some country totally different from what I have been used to; such as Turkey, where religion and every thing else are different." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; there are two objects of curiosity,—the Christian world, and the Mahometan world. All the rest may be considered as barbarous." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, is the 'Turkish Spy' a genuine book?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. Mrs. Manley, in her life, says, that her father wrote the first two volumes: and in another book, 'Dunton's [1] Life and Errours,' we find that the rest was written by one Sault, at two guineas a sheet, under the direction of Dr. Midgeley [2]."

BOSWELL. "This has been a very factious reign, owing to the too great indulgence of government." JOHNSON. "*I* think so, sir. What at first was lenity, grew timidity. Yet this is reasoning *à posteriori*, and may not be just. Supposing a few had at first been punished, I believe faction would have been crushed; but it might have been said, that it was a sanguinary reign. A man cannot tell *à priori* what will be best for government to do. This reign has been very unfortunate. We have had an unsuccessful war; but that does not prove that we have been ill governed. One side or other must prevail in war, as one or other must win at play. When we beat Louis, we were not better governed; nor were the French better governed when Louis beat us."

On Saturday, April 12, I visited him, in company with Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, whom, though a whig, he highly valued. One of the best things he ever said was to this gentleman; who, before he set out for Ireland as secretary to Lord Northington, when lord lieutenant, expressed to the sage some modest and virtuous doubts, whether he could bring himself to practise those arts which it is supposed a person in that situation has occasion to employ. "Do n't be afraid, sir," said Johnson, with a pleasant smile; "you will soon make a very pretty rascal."

He talked to-day a good deal of the wonderful extent and variety of London, and observed, that men of curious inquiry might see in it such modes of life as very few could even imagine. He in particular recommended to us to *explore Wapping*, which we resolved to do [3].

Mr. Lowe, the painter, who was with him, was very much distressed that a large picture which he had painted was refused to be received into the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. Mrs. Thrale knew Johnson's character so superficially, as to represent him as unwilling to do small acts of benevolence; and mentions, in particular, that he would hardly take the trouble to write a letter in favour of his friends. The truth, however, is that he was remarkable, in an extraordinary degree, for what she denies to him; and, above all, for this very sort of kindness, writing letters for those to whom his solicitations might be of service. He now gave Mr. Lowe the following, of which I was diligent enough, with his permission, to take copies at the next coffee-house, while Mr. Windham was so good as to stay by me.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"12th April, 1783

"SIR,—Mr. Lowe considers himself as cut off from all credit and all hope by the rejection of his picture from the Exhibition. Upon this work he has exhausted all his powers, and suspended all his expectations: and, certainly, to be refused an opportunity of taking the opinion of the publick, is in itself a very great hardship. It is to be condemned without a trial.

"If you would procure the revocation of this incapacitating edict, you would deliver an unhappy man from great affliction. The council has sometimes reversed its own determination; and I hope that, by your interposition, this luckless picture may be got admitted. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. BARRY.

"12th April, 1783

"SIR,—Mr. Lowe's exclusion from the Exhibition gives him more trouble than you and the other gentlemen of the council could imagine or intend. He considers disgrace and ruin as the inevitable consequence of your determination.

"He says, that some pictures have been received after rejection; and if there be any such precedent, I earnestly entreat that you will use your interest in his favour. Of his work I can say nothing; I pretend not to judge of painting, and this picture I

[1] [John Dunton was a mad bookseller.—ED.]

[2] "The Turkish Spy" was pretended to have been written originally in Arabick; from Arabick translated into Italian, and thence into English. The real authour of the work, which was in fact originally written in Italian, was I. P. Marana, a Genoese, who died at Paris in 1693. John Dunton, in his life, says, that "Mr. *William Bradshaw* received from Dr. Midgeley forty shillings a sheet for writing part of the 'Turkish Spy;' but I do not find that he any where mentions *Sault* as engaged in that work."—MALONE.

[3] We accordingly carried our scheme into execution, in October, 1792; but whether from that uniformity which has in modern times, in a great degree, spread through every part of the metropolis, or from our want of sufficient exertion, we were disappointed.—BOSWELL.

never saw; but I conceive it extremely hard to shut out any man from the possibility of success and therefore I repeat my request that you will propose the re-consideration of Mr. Lowe's case; and if there be any among the council with whom my name can have any weight, be pleased to communicate to them the desire of, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Such intercession was too powerful to be resisted; and Mr. Lowe's performance was admitted at Somerset-place. The subject, as I recollect, was the deluge, at that point of time when the water was verging to the top of the last uncovered mountain. Near to the spot was seen the last of the antediluvian race, exclusive of those who were saved in the ark of Noah. This was one of those giants, then the inhabitants of the earth, who had still strength to swim, and with one of his hands held aloft his infant child. Upon the small remaining dry spot appeared a famished lion, ready to spring at the child and devour it. Mr. Lowe told me that Johnson said to him, "Sir, your picture is noble and probable." "A compliment, indeed," said Mr. Lowe, "from a man who cannot lie, and cannot be mistaken."

About this time he wrote to Mrs. Lucy Porter, mentioning his bad health, and that he intended a visit to Lichfield. "It is," says he, "with no great expectation of amendment that I make every year a journey into the country; but it is pleasant to visit those whose kindness has been often experienced."

On April 18 (being Good Friday), I found him at breakfast, in his usual manner upon that day, drinking tea without milk, and eating a cross bun to prevent faintness; we went to St. Clement's church, as formerly. When we came home from church, he placed himself on one of the stone seats at his garden door, and I took the other, and thus in the open air, and in a placid frame of mind, he talked away very easily. JOHNSON. "Were I a country gentleman I should not be very hospitable, I should not have crowds in my house." BOSWELL. "Sir Alexander Dick tells me that he remembers having a thousand people in a year to dine at his house; that is, reckoning each person as one, each time that he dined there." JOHNSON. "That, sir, is about three a day." BOSWELL. "How your statement lessens the idea!" JOHNSON. "That, sir, is the good of counting. It brings every thing to a certainty, which before floated in the mind indefinitely. BOSWELL. "But *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*: one is sorry to have this diminished" JOHNSON. "Sir, you should not allow yourself to be delighted with errour." BOSWELL. "Three a day seem but few." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, he who entertains three a day does very liberally. And if there is a large family, the poor entertain those three, for they eat what the poor would get: there must be superfluous meat; it must be given to the poor, or thrown out." BOSWELL. "I observe in London, that the poor go about and gather bones, which I understand are manufactured." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; they boil them, and extact a grease from them for greasing wheels and other purposes. Of the best pieces they make a mock ivory, which is used for hafts to knives, and various other things; the coarser pieces they burn and pound, and sell the ashes." BOSWELL. "For what purpose, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, for making a furnace for the chemists for melting iron. A paste made of burnt bones will stand a stronger heat than any thing else. Consider, sir, if you are to melt iron, you cannot line your pot with brass, because it is softer than iron, and would melt sooner; nor with iron, for though malleable iron is harder than cast iron, yet it would not do; but a paste of burnt bones will not melt." BOSWELL. "Do you know, sir, I have discovered a manufacture to a great extent, of what you only piddle at—scraping and drying the peel of oranges[1]? At a place in Newgate-street there is a prodigious quantity prepared, which they sell to the distillers." JOHNSON. "Sir, I believe they make a higher thing out of them than a spirit; they make what is called orange-butter, the oil of the orange inspissated, which they mix perhaps with common pomatum, and make it fragrant. The oil does not fly off in the drying."

BOSWELL. "I wish to have a good walled garden." JOHNSON. "I do n't think it would be worth the expense to you. We compute, in England, a park-wall at a thousand pounds a mile; now a garden-wall must cost at least as much. You intend your trees should grow higher than a deer will leap. Now let us see; for a hundred pounds you could only have forty-four square yards[2], which is very little; for two

[1] It is suggested to me by an anonymous annotator on my work, that the reason why Dr. Johnson collected the peels of squeezed oranges may be found in the 358th Letter in Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, where it appears that he recommended "dried orange-peel, finely powdered," as a medicine.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 512, *note*.—ED.]

[2] [The Bishop of Ferns observes, that Mr Boswell here mistakes forty-four *square yards* for forty-four *yards square*, and thus makes Johnson talk nonsense. What Johnson probably said was this: 1760 yards of wall cost a thousand

hundred pounds you may have eighty-four square yards, which is very well. But when will you get the value of two hundred pounds of walls, in fruit, in your climate? No, sir; such contention with nature is not worth while. I would plant an orchard, and have plenty of such fruit as ripen well in your country. My friend, Dr. Madden, of Ireland, said, that 'in an orchard there should be enough to eat, enough to lay up, enough to be stolen, and enough to rot upon the ground.' Cherries are an early fruit; you may have them; and you may have the early apples and pears." BOSWELL. "We cannot have nonpareils" JOHNSON "Sir, you can no more have nonpareils than you can have grapes." BOSWELL. "We have them, sir; but they are very bad" JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, never try to have a thing merely to show that you *cannot* have it. From ground that would let for forty shillings you may have a large orchard; and you see it costs you only forty shillings. Nay, you may graze the ground when the trees are grown up; you cannot, while they are young." BOSWELL. "Is not a good garden a very common thing in England, sir?" JOHNSON. "Not so common, sir, as you imagine. In Lincolnshire there is hardly an orchard; in Staffordshire very little fruit." BOSWELL. "Has Langton no orchard?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." BOSWELL. "How so, sir?" JOHNSON "Why, sir, from the general negligence of the county. He has it not, because nobody else has it." BOSWELL. "A hot-house is a certain thing; I may have that." JOHNSON. "A hot-house is pretty certain; but you must first build it, then you must keep fires in it, and you must have a gardener to take care of it." BOSWELL. "But if I have a gardener at any rate?" JOHNSON. "Why, yes." BOSWELL. "I 'd have it near my house; there is no need to have it in the orchard." JOHNSON. "Yes, I 'd have it near my house. I would plant a great many currants; the fruit is good, and they make a pretty sweetmeat."

I record this minute detail, which some may think trifling, in order to show clearly how this great man, whose mind could grasp such large and extensive subjects, as he has shown in his literary labours, was yet well-informed in the common affairs of life, and loved to illustrate them.

pounds; therefore, one hundred and seventy-six yards will cost a hundred pounds. One hundred and seventy-six yards will enclose a garden—not of forty-four *square yards*, which would be a small closet—but of forty-four *yards square*, nearly half an acre. Of course, its double will well enclose a garden of eighty-*eight* yards square (eighty-*four* is either a misprint or an additional error), and that, as Johnson remarks, is very well, for it would be above an acre and a half.—ED.]

Mr. Walker, the celebrated master of elocution[1], came in, and then we went up stairs into the study. I asked him if he had taught many clergymen. JOHNSON. "I hope not." WALKER. "I have taught only one, and he is the best reader I ever heard, not by my teaching, but by his own natural talents." JOHNSON. "Were he the best reader in the world, I would not have it told that he was taught." Here was one of his peculiar prejudices. Could it be any disadvantage to the clergyman to have it known that he was taught an easy and graceful delivery? BOSWELL. "Will you not allow, sir, that a man may be taught to read well?" JOHNSON "Why, sir, so far as to read better than he might do without being taught, yes. Formerly it was supposed that there was no difference in reading, but that one read as well as another." BOSWELL. "It is wonderful to see old Sheridan as enthusiastick about oratory as ever." WALKER "His enthusiasm as to what oratory will do, may be too great: but he reads well" JOHNSON. "He reads well, but he reads low; and you know it is much easier to read low than to read high; for when you read high, you are much more limited, your loudest note can be but one, and so the variety is less in proportion to the loudness. Now some people have occasion to speak to an extensive audience, and must speak loud to be heard." WALKER. "The art is to read strong, though low."

Talking of the origin of language:—JOHNSON. "It must have come by inspiration. A thousand, nay a million of children could not invent a language. While the organs are pliable, there is not understanding enough to form a language; by the time that there is understanding enough, the organs are become stiff. We know that after a certain age we cannot learn to pronounce a new language. No foreigner, who comes to England when advanced in life, ever pronounces English tolerably well, at least such instances are very rare When I maintain that language must have come by inspiration, I do not mean that inspiration is required for rhetorick, and all the beauties of language; for when once man has language, we can conceive that he may gradually form modifications of it. I mean only that inspiration seems to me to be necessary to give man the faculty of speech; to inform him that he may have speech; which I think he could no more find out without inspiration, than cows or hogs would think of such a faculty." WALKER. "Do you think, sir, that there are any perfect synonymes in any language?" JOHNSON. "Originally there were not:

[1] [He published several works on elocution and pronunciation, and died August 1, 1807, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.—ED.]

but by using words negligently, or in poetry, one word comes to be confounded with another."

He talked of Dr. Dodd. "A friend of mine," said he, "came to me and told me, that a lady[1] wished to have Dr. Dodd's picture in a bracelet, and asked me for a motto. I said, I could think of no better than *Currat Lex*. I was very willing to have him pardoned, that is, to have the sentence changed to transportation: but, when he was once hanged, I did not wish he should be made a saint."

Mrs. Burney, wife of his friend, Dr. Burney, came in, and he seemed to be entertained with her conversation.

Garrick's funeral was talked of as extravagantly expensive. Johnson, from his dislike to exaggeration, would not allow that it was distinguished by an extraordinary pomp. "Were there not six horses to each coach?" said Mrs. Burney. JOHNSON. "Madam, there were no more six horses than six phœnixes."

Mrs. Burney wondered that some very beautiful new buildings should be erected in Moorfields, in so shocking a situation as between Bedlam and St. Luke's Hospital; and said she could not live there. JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, you see nothing there to hurt you. You no more think of madness by having windows that look to Bedlam, than you think of death by having windows that look to a churchyard." MRS. BURNEY. "We may look to a churchyard, sir; for it is right that we should be kept in mind of death." JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, if you go to that, it is right that we should be kept in mind of madness, which is occasioned by too much indulgence of imagination. I think a very moral use may be made of these new buildings: I would have those who have heated imaginations live there, and take warning." MRS. BURNEY. "But, sir, many of the poor people that are mad have become so from disease, or from distressing events. It is, therefore, not their fault, but their misfortune; and, therefore, to think of them is a melancholy consideration."

Time passed on in conversation till it was too late for the service of the church at three o'clock. I took a walk, and left him alone for some time; then returned, and we had coffee and conversation again by ourselves.

I stated the character of a noble friend of mine as a curious case for his opinion[2]:—"He is the most inexplicable man to me that I ever knew. Can you explain him, sir? He is, I really believe, noble-minded, generous, and princely. But his most intimate friends may be separated from him for years, without his ever asking a question concerning them. He will meet them with a formality, a coldness, a stately indifference; but when they come close to him, and fairly engage him in conversation, they find him as easy, pleasant, and kind as they could wish. One then supposes that what is so agreeable will soon be renewed; but stay away from him for half a year, and he will neither call on you, nor send to inquire about you." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I cannot ascertain his character exactly, as I do not know him; but I should not like to have such a man for my friend. He may love study, and wish not to be interrupted by his friends; *Amici fures temporis*. He may be a frivolous man, and be so much occupied with petty pursuits that he may not want friends. Or he may have a notion that there is dignity in appearing indifferent, while he in fact may not be more indifferent at his heart than another."

We went to evening prayers at St. Clement's at seven, and then parted.

[The reader will recollect, that in the year 1775, when Dr. Johnson visited France, he was kindly entertained by the English Benedictine monks at Paris[3]. One of that body, the Rev. James Compton, in the course of some conversation with him at that time, asked him, if any of them should become converts to the protestant faith, and should visit England, whether they might hope for a friendly reception from him: to which he warmly replied, "that he should receive such a convert most cordially." In consequence of this conversation, Mr. Compton, a few years afterwards, having some doubts concerning the religion in which he had been bred, was induced, by reading the 110th Number of "The Rambler," (on REPENTANCE,) to consider the subject more deeply; and the result of his inquiries was, a determination to become a protestant[4]. With this view, in the summer of 1782, he returned to his native country, from whence he had been absent from his sixth to his thirty-fifth year; and on his arrival in London, very scantily provided with the means of subsistence, he immediately repaired to Malone

[1] [The Editor has been told that the lady was Dr. Dodd's relict; but if this was so, Dr. Johnson could not have been aware of it, as he could hardly have disapproved of *her* wearing his picture, and would surely not have insulted *her* by such an answer.—ED.]

[2] [Probably Lord Mountstuart, afterwards first Marquis of Bute.—ED.]

[3] See *ante*, p. 9.—MALONE.

[4] [Mr. Markland observes, that in the very paper of the Rambler, to which Mr. Compton's conversion is attributed, is to be found a passage, by no means in principle hostile to the fasts and other penitential observances practised by the Romish church. It is, indeed, to be hoped and believed that Mr. Compton's conversion rested upon deeper grounds than the observations in the Rambler.—ED.]

Bolt-court, to visit Dr. Johnson; and having informed him of his desire to be admitted into the church of England, for this purpose solicited his aid to procure for him an introduction to the bishop of London, Dr. Lowth. At the time of his first visit, Johnson was so much indisposed, that he could allow him only a short conversation of a few minutes; but he desired him to call again in the course of the following week. When Mr. Compton visited him a second time, he was perfectly recovered from his indisposition; received him with the utmost cordiality; and not only undertook the management of the business in which his friendly interposition had been requested, but with great kindness exerted himself in this gentleman's favour, with a view to his future subsistence, and immediately supplied him with the means of present support.

Finding that the proposed introduction to the bishop of London had from some accidental causes been deferred, lest Mr. Compton, who then lodged at Highgate, should suppose himself neglected, he wrote him the following note:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. COMPTON.

"6th October, 1782.

"SIR,—I have directed Dr. Vyse's letter to be sent to you, that you may know the situation of your business. Delays are incident to all affairs; but there appears nothing in your case of either superciliousness or neglect. Dr. Vyse seems to wish you well. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Compton having, by Johnson's advice, quitted Highgate, and settled in London, had now more frequent opportunities of visiting his friend, and profiting by his conversation and advice. Still, however, his means of subsistence being very scanty, Dr. Johnson kindly promised to afford him a decent maintenance, until by his own exertions he should be able to obtain a livelihood; which benevolent offer he accepted, and lived entirely at Johnson's expense till the end of January, 1783; in which month, having previously been introduced to Bishop Lowth, he was received into our communion in St. James's parish-church. In the following April, the place of undermaster of St. Paul's school having become vacant, his friendly protector did him a more essential service, by writing the following letter in his favour, to the Mercers' Company, in whom the appointment of the under-master lay:

"TO THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF THE MERCERS.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 19th April, 1783.

"GENTLEMEN,—At the request of the Reverend Mr. James Compton, who now solicits your votes to be elected under-master of St. Paul's school, I testify, with great sincerity, that he is, in my opinion, a man of abilities sufficient, and more than sufficient, for the duties of the office for which he is a candidate. I am, gentlemen, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Though this testimony in Mr. Compton's favour was not attended with immediate success, the Reverend Mr. Edwards, who had been bred in St. Paul's school, having been elected to fill the vacant office, yet Johnson's kindness was not without effect; and the result of his recommendation shows how highly he was estimated in the great commercial city of London; for his letter procured Mr. Compton so many well-wishers in the respectable company of mercers, that he was honoured, by the favour of several of its members, with more applications to teach Latin and French than he could find time to attend to. In 1796, the Reverend Mr. Gilbert, one of his majesty's French chaplains, having accepted a living in Guernsey, nominated Mr. Compton as his substitute at the French chapel of St. James's; which appointment, in April, 1811, he relinquished for a better in the French chapel at Bethnal Green. By the favour of Dr. Porteus, the late excellent Bishop of London, he was also appointed, in 1802, chaplain of the Dutch chapel at St. James's; a station which he still holds [1].]

On Sunday, April 20, being Easter-day, after attending solemn service at St. Paul's, I came to Dr. Johnson, and found Mr. Lowe, the painter, sitting with him. Mr. Lowe mentioned the great number of new buildings of late in London, yet that Dr. Johnson had observed, that the number of inhabitants was not increased. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the bills of mortality prove that no more people die now than formerly; so it is plain no more live. The register of births proves nothing, for not one-tenth of the people of London are born there." BOSWELL. "I believe, sir, a great many of the children born in London die early." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir." BOSWELL "But those who do live are as stout and strong people as any. Dr. Price says, they must be naturally strong to get through." JOHNSON. "That is system, sir. A great traveller observes, that it is said there are

[1] The preceding account of this gentleman's conversion, and of Johnson's subsequent liberality to him, would, doubtless, have been embodied by Mr. Boswell in his work, had he been apprized of the circumstances above related, which add one more proof to those which he has accumulated of Johnson's uniform and unbounded benevolence.—MALONE

no weak or deformed people among the Indians; but he, with much sagacity, assigns the reason of this, which is, that the hardship of their life as hunters and fishers does not allow weak or diseased children to grow up. Now had I been an Indian I must have died early; my eyes would not have served me to get food. I, indeed, now could fish, give me English tackle; but had I been an Indian, I must have starved, or they would have knocked me on the head, when they saw I could do nothing." BOSWELL. "Perhaps they would have taken care of you; we are told they are fond of oratory,—you would have talked to them." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, I should not have lived long enough to be fit to talk; I should have been dead before I was ten years old. Depend upon it, sir, a savage, when he is hungry, will not carry about with him a looby of nine years old, who cannot help himself. They have no affection, sir." BOSWELL. "I believe natural affection, of which we hear so much, is very small." JOHNSON. "Sir, natural affection is nothing; but affection from principle and established duty is sometimes wonderfully strong." LOWE. "A hen, sir, will feed her chickens in preference to herself." JOHNSON. "But we do n't know that the hen is hungry; let the hen be fairly hungry, and I'll warrant she'll peck the corn herself. A cock, I believe, will feed hens instead of himself: but we do n't know that the cock is hungry." BOSWELL. "And that, sir, is not from affection, but gallantry. But some of the Indians have affection." JOHNSON. "Sir, that they help some of their children is plain; for some of them live, which they could not do without being helped."

I dined with him; the company were Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Desmoulins, and Mr. Lowe. He seemed not to be well, talked little, grew drowsy soon after dinner, and retired; upon which I went away.

Having next day gone to Mr. Burke's seat in the country, from whence I was recalled by an express, that a near relation of mine had killed his antagonist in a duel, and was himself dangerously wounded, I saw little of Dr. Johnson till Monday, April 28, when I spent a considerable part of the day with him, and introduced the subject which then chiefly occupied my mind. JOHNSON. "I do not see, sir, that fighting is absolutely forbidden in scripture; I see revenge forbidden, but not self-defence." BOSWELL "The quakers say it is.—'Unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek, offer him also the other.'" JOHNSON. "But stay, sir; the text is meant only to have the effect of moderating passion; it is plain that we are not to take it in a literal sense We see this from the context, where there are other recommendations; which, I warrant you, the quaker will not take literally; as, for instance, 'From him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away.' Let a man whose credit is bad come to a quaker, and say, 'Well, sir, lend me a hundred pounds;' he 'll find him as unwilling as any other man. No, sir; a man may shoot the man who invades his character, as he may shoot him who attempts to break into his house[1]. So, in 1745, my friend, Tom Cumming, the quaker, said he would not fight, but he would drive an ammunition cart; and we know that the quakers have sent flannel waistcoats to our soldiers, to enable them to fight better." BOSWELL. "When a man is the aggressor, and by ill usage forces on a duel in which he is killed, have we not little ground to hope that he is gone to a state of happiness?" JOHNSON. "Sir, we are not to judge determinately of the state in which a man leaves this life. He may in a moment have repented effectually, and it is possible may have been accepted of God. There is in 'Camden's Remains' an epitaph upon a very wicked man, who was killed by a fall from his horse, in which he is supposed to say,

'Between the stirrup and the ground,
I mercy ask'd, I mercy found[2].'"

BOSWELL. "Is not the expression in the burial-service,—'in the *sure* and *certain* hope of a blessed[3] resurrection'—too strong

[1] I think it necessary to caution my readers against concluding that, in this or any other conversation of Dr. Johnson, they have his serious and deliberate opinion on the subject of duelling. In my Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, third edit. p. 386, it appears that he made this frank confession: "Nobody, at times, talks more laxly than I do;" and ibid. p. 231, "He fairly owned he could not explain the rationality of duelling." We may, therefore, infer, that he could not think that justifiable, which seems so inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. At the same time, it must be confessed, that, from the prevalent notions of honour, a gentleman who receives a challenge is reduced to a dreadful alternative. A remarkable instance of this is furnished by a clause in the will of the late Colonel Thomas, of the Guards, written the night before he fell in a duel, September 3, 1783: "In the first place, I commit my soul to Almighty God, in hopes of his mercy and pardon for the irreligious step I now (in compliance with the unwarrantable customs of this wicked world) put myself under the necessity of taking."—BOSWELL.

[2] In repeating this epitaph, Johnson improved it. The original runs thus:

'*Betwixt* the stirrup and the ground,
Mercy I ask'd, mercy I found."—MALONE.

[3] [Mr. Boswell, quoting from memory, has interpolated the word "blessed." The words are "in sure and certain hope of *the* resurrection."]

to be used indiscriminately, and, indeed, sometimes when those over whose bodies it is said have been notoriously profane?" JOHNSON. "It is sure and certain *hope*, sir, not *belief*." I did not insist further; but cannot help thinking that less positive words would be more proper[1].

Talking of a man who was grown very fat, so as to be incommoded with corpulency, he said, "He eats too much, sir." BOSWELL "I don't know, sir; you will see one man fat, who eats moderately, and another lean, who eats a great deal." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, whatever may be the quantity that a man eats, it is plain that if he is too fat, he has eaten more than he should have done. One man may have a digestion that consumes food better than common; but it is certain that solidity is increased by putting something to it." BOSWELL. "But may not solids swell and be distended?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, they may swell and be distended; but that is not fat."

We talked of the accusation against a gentleman[2] for supposed delinquencies in India. JOHNSON. "What foundation there is for accusation I know not, but they will not get at him. Where bad actions are committed at so great a distance, a delinquent can obscure the evidence till the scent becomes cold; there is a cloud between, which cannot be penetrated: therefore all distant power is bad. I am clear that the best plan for the government of India is a despotick governour; for if he be a good man, it is evidently the best government; and supposing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many. A governour whose power is checked lets others plunder, that he himself may be allowed to plunder; but if despotick, he sees that the more he lets others plunder, the less there will be for himself, so he restrains them; and though he himself plunders, the country is a gainer, compared with being plundered by numbers."

I mentioned the very liberal payment which had been received for reviewing; and as evidence of this, that it had been proved in a trial, that Dr. Shebbeare had received six guineas a sheet for that kind of literary labour. JOHNSON. "Sir, he might get six guineas for a particular sheet, but not *communibus sheetibus*." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, by a sheet of review, is it meant that it shall be all of the writer's own composition? or are extracts, made from the book reviewed, deducted?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; it is a sheet, no matter of what." BOSWELL. "I think that is not reasonable." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, it is. A man will more easily write a sheet all his own, than read an octavo volume to get extracts." To one of Johnson's wonderful fertility of mind I believe writing was really easier than reading and extracting; but with ordinary men the case is very different. A great deal, indeed, will depend upon the care and judgment with which extracts are made. I can suppose the operation to be tedious and difficult; but in many instances we must observe crude morsels cut out of books as if at random; and when a large extract is made from one place, it surely may be done with very little trouble. One, however, I must acknowledge, might be led, from the practice of reviewers, to suppose that they take a pleasure in original writing; for we often find, that instead of giving an accurate account of what has been done by the authour whose work they are reviewing, which is surely the proper business of a literary journal, they produce some plausible and ingenious conceits of their own, upon the topicks which have been discussed.

Upon being told that old Mr. Sheridan, indignant at the neglect of his oratorical plans, had threatened to go to America: JOHNSON. "I hope he will go to America." BOSWELL. "The Americans don't want oratory." JOHNSON. "But we can want Sheridan."

On Monday, April 28, I found him at home in the morning, and Mr. Seward with

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&c. &c L'Estrange, in his "Alliance of Divine Offices," p. 302, observes "these words import the faith of the *congregation* then present in the article of the resurrection. The plural, '*our* vile bodies,' excludes the restraint to a singular number." The reformed liturgies have uniformly employed the same cautious language. In one of the prayers used in the burial service, in the first book of Edward VI. the following passage occurs: "We give thee hearty thanks for this, thy servant, whom thou hast delivered, &c. &c. And, *as we trust*, hast brought his soul into sure consolation of rest."—J. H. MARKLAND.]

[1] Upon this objection the Reverend Mr. Ralph Churton, fellow of Brazennose College, Oxford, has favoured me with the following satisfactory observation: "The passage in the burial-service does not mean the resurrection of the person interred, but the general resurrection; it is in sure and certain hope of *the* resurrection; not *his* resurrection. Where the deceased is really spoken of, the expression is very different,—'as our hope is this our brother doth' [rest in Christ]; a mode of speech consistent with every thing but absolute certainty that the person departed doth *not* rest in Christ, which no one can be assured of without immediate revelation from Heaven. In the first of these places, also, 'eternal life' does not necessarily mean eternity of bliss, but merely the eternity of the state, whether in happiness or in misery, to ensue upon the resurrection; which is probably the sense of 'the life everlasting,' in the Apostles' Creed. See Wheatly and Bennet on the Common Prayer."—BOSWELL.

[2] [Either Sir Elijah Impey, or Mr. Warren Hastings.—ED.]

him. Horace having been mentioned: BOSWELL. "There is a great deal of thinking in his works. One finds there almost every thing but religion." SEWARD. "He speaks of his returning to it, in his Ode *Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens.*" JOHNSON. "Sir, he was not in earnest; this was merely poetical." BOSWELL. "There are, I am afraid, many people who have no religion at all." SEWARD. "And sensible people too." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, not sensible in that respect. There must be either a natural or a moral stupidity, if one lives in a total neglect of so very important a concern." SEWARD. "I wonder that there should be people without religion." JOHNSON. "Sir, you need not wonder at this, when you consider how large a proportion of almost every man's life is passed without thinking of it. I myself was for some years totally regardless of religion. It had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickness brought it back, and I hope I have never lost it since." BOSWELL. "My dear sir, what a man must you have been without religion! Why you must have gone on drinking, and swearing, and—" JOHNSON (with a smile). "I drank enough, and swore enough, to be sure." SEWARD. "One should think that sickness and the view of death would make more men religious." JOHNSON. "Sir, they do not know how to go about it: they have not the first notion. A man who has never had religion before, no more grows religious when he is sick, than a man who has never learnt figures can count when he has need of calculation."

I mentioned a worthy friend of ours whom we valued much, but observed that he was too ready to introduce religious discourse upon all occasions[1]. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, he will introduce religious discourse without seeing whether it will end in instruction and improvement, or produce some profane jest. He would introduce it in the company of Wilkes, and twenty more such."

I mentioned Dr. Johnson's excellent distinction between liberty of conscience and liberty of teaching. JOHNSON. "Consider, sir; if you have children whom you wish to educate in the principles of the church of England, and there comes a Quaker who tries to pervert them to his principles, you would drive away the Quaker. You would not trust to the predomination of right, which you believe is in your opinions; you will keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the state. If any one attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the state approves, the magistrate may and ought to restrain him." SEWARD. "Would you restrain private conversation, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is difficult to say where private conversation begins, and where it ends. If we three should discuss even the great question concerning the existence of a Supreme Being by ourselves, we should not be restrained; for that would be to put an end to all improvement But if we should discuss it in the presence of ten boarding-school girls, and as many boys, I think the magistrate would do well to put us in the stocks, to finish the debate there."

Lord Hailes had sent him a present of a curious little printed poem, on repairing the university of Aberdeen, by David *Malloch*, which he thought would please Johnson, as affording clear evidence that Mallet had appeared even as a literary character by the name of *Malloch;* his changing which to one of softer sound had given Johnson occasion to introduce him into his Dictionary, under the article *Alias*[2]. This piece was, I suppose, one of Mallet's first essays. It is preserved in his works, with several variations. Johnson having read aloud, from the beginning of it, where there were some common-place assertions as to the superiority of ancient times:—"How false," said he, "is all this, to say that 'in ancient times learning was not a disgrace to a peer, as it is now!' In ancient times a peer was as ignorant as any one else. He would have been angry to have it thought he could write his name. Men in ancient times dared to stand forth with a degree of ignorance with which nobody would now dare to stand forth. I am always angry when I hear ancient times praised at the expense of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly; for it is universally diffused. You have, perhaps, no man who knows as much Greek and Latin as Bentley; no man who knows as much mathematicks as Newton: but you have many more men who

[Mr. Langton: see *ante*, v. i. pp. 319, 351, and p. 126 of the present vol.—ED.]

[2] Malloch, as Mr. Bindley observes to me, "continued to write his name thus, *after he came to London*. His verses prefixed to the second edition of Thomson's 'Winter' are so subscribed, and so are his Letters written in London, and published a few years ago in 'The European Magazine;' but he soon afterwards adopted the alteration to Mallet, for he is so called in the list of subscribers to Savage's Miscellanies, printed in 1726; and thenceforward uniformly *Mallet*, in all his writings."—MALONE. A notion has been entertained, that no such exemplification of *Alias* is to be found in Johnson's Dictionary, and that the whole story was waggishly fabricated by Wilkes in the "North Briton." The real fact is, that it is not to be found in the folio or quarto editions, but was added by Johnson in his own *octavo* abridgement in 1756.—J. BOSWELL

know Greek and Latin, and who know mathematicks"

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, May-day, 1783.

Letters, vol. ii. pp. 255, 257.

"For some days after your departure I was pretty well; but I have begun to languish again, and last night was very tedious and oppressive. I excused myself to-day from dining with General Paoli, where I love to dine; but I was griped by the talons of necessity.

"On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admission of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the show open ten hours, and the spectators staying one with another each an hour, the room never had fewer than three hundred and eighty jostling against each other. Poor Lowe met some discouragement; but I interposed for him, and prevailed.

"Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it; which, if you read it, you will find decorated with some satirical pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. You must, however, think with some esteem of Barry for the comprehension of his design."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 8th May, 1783.

"I thought your letter long in coming. I suppose it is true that I looked but languid at the Exhibition, but have been worse since. Last Wednesday—the Wednesday of last week—I came home ill from Mr. Jodrel's, and after a tedious, oppressive, impatient night, sent an excuse to General Paoli, and took on Thursday two brisk catharticks and a dose of calomel. Little things do me no good. At night I was much better. Next day cathartick again, and the third day opium for my cough. I lived without flesh all the three days. The recovery was more than I expected. I went to church on Sunday quite at ease.

"The Exhibition prospers so much that Sir Joshua says it will maintain the academy. He estimates the probable amount at three thousand pounds. Steevens is of opinion that Croft's books will sell for near three times as much as they cost; which, however, is not more than might be expected.

"Favour me with a direction to Musgrave[1] of Ireland; I have a charitable office to propose to him. Is he knight or baronet?

"My present circle of enjoyment is as narrow for me as the Circus [at Bath] for Mrs. Montague. When I first settled in this neighbourhood I had Richardson and Lawrence and Mrs. Allen at hand. I had Mrs. Williams, then no bad companion; and Levett for a long time always to be had. If I now go out, I must go far for company, and at last come back to two sick and discontented women, who can hardly talk if they had any thing to say, and whose hatred of each other makes one great exercise of their faculties."]

On Thursday, 1st May, I visited him in the evening along with young Mr. Burke. He said, "It is strange that there should be so little reading in the world, and so much writing. People in general do not willingly read, if they can have any thing else to amuse them. There must be an external impulse; emulation, or vanity, or avarice. The progress which the understanding makes through a book has more pain than pleasure in it. Language is scanty and inadequate to express the nice gradations and mixtures of our feelings. No man reads a book of science from pure inclination. The books that we do read with pleasure are light compositions, which contain a quick succession of events. However, I have this year read all Virgil through. I read a book of the Æneid every night, so it was done in twelve nights, and I had a great delight in it. The Georgicks did not give me so much pleasure, except the fourth book. The Eclogues I have almost all by heart. I do not think the story of the Æneid interesting. I like the story of the Odyssey much better; and this not on account of the wonderful things which it contains; for there are wonderful things enough in the Æneid; —the ships of the Trojans turned to sea-nymphs,—the tree at Polydorus's tomb dropping blood. The story of the Odyssey is interesting, as a great part of it is domestick. It has been said there is pleasure in writing, particularly in writing verses. I allow you may have pleasure from writing after it is over, if you have written well[2]; but you don't go willingly to it again. I know when I have been writing verses, I have run my finger down the margin, to see how many I had made, and how few I had to make."

He seemed to be in a very placid humour; and although I have no note of the particu-

[1] [Sir Richard Musgrave, of Turin, in the county of Waterford, in Ireland, created a baronet in 1782. He published several political works, particularly a History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798; written with great asperity against the Roman Catholics, to whose tenets Sir Richard attributed that rebellion. He was for many years a member of the Irish parliament, and died in 1818.—ED.]

[2] Dum pingit, fruitur arte; postquam pinxera fruitur fructu artis.—SENECA.—KEARNEY

ars of young Mr. Burke's conversation, it is but justice to mention in general, that it was such that Dr. Johnson said to me afterwards, "He did very well indeed, I have a mind to tell his father [1]."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"2d May, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—The gentleman who waits on you with this is Mr. Cruikshanks, who wishes to succeed his friend Dr. Hunter as professor of anatomy in the royal academy. His qualifications are very generally known, and it adds dignity to the institution that such men [2] are candidates. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I have no minute of any interview with Johnson till Thursday, May 15th, when I find what follows: BOSWELL. "I wish much to be in parliament, sir." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, unless you come resolved to support any administration, you would be the worse for being in parliament, because you would be obliged to live more expensively." BOSWELL. "Perhaps, sir, I should be the less happy for being in parliament. I never would sell my vote, and I should be vexed if things went wrong." JOHNSON. "That 's cant, sir. It would not vex you more in the House than in the gallery: publick affairs vex no man." BOSWELL. "Have not they vexed yourself a little, sir? Have not you been vexed by all the turbulence of this reign, and by that absurd vote of the house of commons, 'That the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished?'" JOHNSON. "Sir, I have never slept an hour less, nor ate an ounce less meat. I would have knocked the factious dogs on the head, to be sure; but I was not *vexed*." BOSWELL. "I declare, sir, upon my honour, I did imagine I was vexed, and took a pride in it; but it *was*, perhaps, cant; for I own I neither ate less nor slept less." JOHNSON. "My dear friend, clear your *mind* of cant. You may *talk* as other people do: you may say to a man, 'Sir, I am your humble servant.' You are *not* his most humble servant. You may say, 'These are bad times; it is a melancholy thing to be reserved to such times.' You do n't mind the times. You tell a man, 'I am sorry you had such bad weather the last day of your journey, and were so much wet.' You do n't care sixpence whether he is wet or dry. You may *talk* in this manner; it is a mode of talking in society: but do n't *think* foolishly."

I talked of living in the country. JOHNSON. "Do n't set up for what is called hospitality: it is a waste of time, and a waste of money: you are eaten up, and not the more respected for your liberality. If your house be like an inn, nobody cares for you. A man who stays a week with another makes him a slave for a week." BOSWELL. "But there are people, sir, who make their houses a home to their guests, and are themselves quite easy." JOHNSON. "Then, sir, home must be the same to the guests, and they need not come."

Here he discovered a notion common enough in persons not much accustomed to entertain company, that there must be a degree of elaborate attention, otherwise company will think themselves neglected; and such attention is no doubt very fatiguing He proceeded: "I would not, however, be a stranger in my own country; I would visit my neighbours, and receive their visits; but I would not be in haste to return visits. If a gentleman comes to see me, I tell him he does me a great deal of honour. I do not go to see him perhaps for ten weeks; then we are very complaisant to each other. No, sir, you will have much more influence by giving or lending money where it is wanted, than by hospitality."

On Saturday, 17th May, I saw him for a short time. Having mentioned that I had that morning been with old Mr. Sheridan, he remembered their former intimacy with a cordial warmth, and said to me, "Tell Mr. Sheridan I shall be glad to see him and shake hands with him." BOSWELL. "It is to me very wonderful that resentment should be kept up so long." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is not altogether resentment that he does not visit me; it is partly falling out of the habit,—partly disgust, such as one has at a drug that has made him sick. Besides, he knows that I laugh at his oratory."

[Of Sheridan's Book on Oratory, Dr. Johnson said, "It is impossible to read without feeling a perpetual elevation of hope, and a perpetual disappointment. If we should have a bad harvest this year, Sheridan would say it was owing to the neglect of oratory."] Gent. Mag. vol. lv p. 288.

Another day I spoke of one of our friends, of whom he, as well as I, had a very high opinion. He expatiated in his praise; but added, "Sir, he is a cursed whig, a *bottomless* whig, as they all are now [3]."

[1] ['The fond partiality of his father (for such it must be admitted to have been) for the talents of Mr. Richard Burke is now well known. Mr. Burke is reported, with a mixture of personal and paternal pride, to have remarked how extraordinary it was that Lord Chatham, Lord Holland, and he should each have had a son so superiour to their fathers.—ED.]

[2] Let it be remembered by those who accuse Dr. Johnson of illiberality, that both were *Scotchmen* —BOSWELL

[3] [Mr. Burke, who, however, proved himself,

I mentioned my expectations from the interest of an eminent person[1] then in power; adding, "But I have no claim but the claim of friendship: however, some people will go a great way from that motive." JOHNSON. "Sir, they will go all the way from that motive." A gentleman talked of retiring. "Never think of that," said Johnson. The gentleman urged, "I should then do no ill." JOHNSON. "Nor no good either. Sir, it would be a civil suicide."

ED. [Mr. Boswell about this period was negotiating another dinner with Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes at the house of the latter; but though Johnson had no objection, the dinner does not seem to have taken place.

"JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. TO JOHN WILKES, ESQ.

"Wednesday, 21st May, [1783].

Wilkes Corresp. vol. iv. pp. 314, 321

"Mr. Boswell's compliments to Mr. Wilkes. He rejoices to find he is so much better as to be abroad. He finds that it would not be unpleasant to Dr. Johnson to dine at Mr. Wilkes's. The thing would be so curiously benignant, it were a pity it should not take place. Nobody but Mr. Boswell should be asked to meet the Doctor. Mr. Boswell goes for Scotland on Friday the 30th. If then a card were sent to the Doctor on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday without delay, it is to be hoped he would be fixed; and notice will be sent to Mr. Boswell."

"MR. BOSWELL TO MR. AND MISS WILKES.

"Mr. Boswell presents his best compliments to Mr. and Miss Wilkes; encloses Dr. Johnson's answer; and regrets much that so agreeable a meeting must be deferred till next year, as Mr. Boswell is to set out for Scotland in a few days. Hopes Mr. Wilkes will write to him there."

Enclosed.

"24th May, 1783.

"Dr. Johnson returns thanks to Mr. and Miss Wilkes for their kind invitation; but he is engaged for Tuesday to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and for Wednesday to Mr. Paradise."]

On Monday, May 26, I found him at tea, and the celebrated Miss Burney, the authour of "Evelina" and "Cecilia," with him. I asked if there would be any speakers in parliament, if there were no places to be obtained. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir. Why do you speak here? Either to instruct and entertain, which is a benevolent motive; or for distinction, which is a selfish motive." I mentioned "Cecilia." JOHNSON (with an air of animated satisfaction). "Sir, if you talk of 'Cecilia,' talk on."

We talked of Mr. Barry's exhibition of his pictures. JOHNSON. "Whatever the hand may have done, the mind has done its part. There is a grasp of mind there which you find nowhere else[2]."

I asked whether a man naturally virtuous, or one who has overcome wicked inclinations, is the best. JOHNSON. "Sir, to *you*, the man who has overcome wicked inclinations is not the best. He has more merit to *himself*. I would rather trust my money to a man who has no hands, and so a physical impossibility to steal, than to a man of the most honest principles. There is a witty satirical story of Foote. He had a small bust of Garrick placed upon his bureau. 'You may be surprised,' said he, 'that I allow him to be so near my gold;—but you will observe he has no hands.'"

On Friday, May 29, being to set out for Scotland next morning, I passed a part of the day with him in more than usual earnestness, as his health was in a more precarious state than at any time when I had parted from him. He, however, was quick and lively, and critical, as usual. I mentioned one who was a very learned man. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, he has a great deal of learning; but it never lies straight. There is never one idea by the side of another; 'tis all entangled: and then he drives it so awkwardly upon conversation!"

I stated to him an anxious thought, by which a sincere Christian might be disturbed, even when conscious of having lived a good life, so far as is consistent with human infirmity: he might fear that he should afterwards fall away, and be guilty of such crimes as would render all his former religion vain. Could there be, upon this awful subject, such a thing as balancing of accounts? Suppose a man who has led a good life for seven years commits an act of wickedness, and instantly dies; will his former good life have any effect in his favour? JOHNSON. "Sir, if a man has led a good life for seven years, and then is hurried by passion to do what is wrong, and is suddenly carried off, depend upon it he will have the reward of his seven years' good life: God will not take a catch of him. Upon this principle Richard Baxter believes

on the French Revolution, not to be a *bottomless* whig.—ED.]

[1] [Probably Lord Mountstuart. See *ante*, p. 31.—ED.]

[2] In Mr. Barry's printed analysis or description of these pictures, he speaks of Johnson's character in the highest terms.—BOSWELL. [Yet see what Johnson himself says on this point, in the conclusion of his Letter to Mrs. Thrale, of the 1st of May, *ante*, p. 346.—ED.]

that a suicide may be saved. 'If,' says he, 'it should be objected that what I maintain may encourage suicide, I answer, I am not to tell a lie to prevent it.'" BOSWELL. "But does not the text say, 'As the tree falls, so it must lie?'" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; as the tree falls: but,"—after a little pause—"that is meant as to the general state of the tree, not what is the effect of a sudden blast." In short, he interpreted the expression as referring to *condition*, not to *position*. The common notion, therefore, seems to be erroneous; and Shenstone's witty remark[1] on divines trying to give the tree a jerk upon a death-bed, to make it lie favourably, is not well founded.

I asked him what works of Richard Baxter's I should read. He said, "Read any of them; they are all good."

He said, "Get as much force of mind as you can. Live within your income. Always have something saved at the end of the year. Let your imports be more than your exports, and you'll never go far wrong."

I assured him, that in the extensive and various range of his acquaintance there never had been any one who had a more sincere respect and affection for him than I had. He said, "I believe it, sir. Were I in distress, there is no man to whom I should sooner come than to you. I should like to come and have a cottage in your park, toddle about, live mostly on milk, and be taken care of by Mrs. Boswell. She and I are good friends now; are we not?"

Talking of devotion, he said, "Though it be true that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands,' yet in this state of being our minds are more piously affected in places appropriated to divine worship, than in others. Some people have a particular room in their houses where they say their prayers; of which I do not disapprove, as it may animate their devotion."

He embraced me, and gave me his blessing, as usual when I was leaving him for any length of time. I walked from his door to-day with a fearful apprehension of what might happen before I returned.

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM WINDHAM.

"London, 31st May, 1783.

"SIR,—The bringer of this letter is the father of Miss Philips[2], a singer, who comes to try her voice on the stage at Dublin.

"Mr. Philips is one of my old friends; and as I am of opinion that neither he nor his daughter will do any thing that can disgrace their benefactors, I take the liberty of entreating you to countenance and protect them so far as may be suitable to your station[3] and character, and shall consider myself as obliged by any favourable notice which they shall have the honour of receiving from you. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The following is another instance of his active benevolence:

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"2d June, 1783

"DEAR SIR,—I have sent you some of my godson's[4] performances, of which I do not pretend to form any opinion. When I took the liberty of mentioning him to you, I did not know what I have since been told, that Mr. Moser had admitted him among the students of the Academy. What more can be done for him, I earnestly entreat you to consider; for I am very desirous that he should derive some advantage from my connexion with him. If you are inclined to see him, I will bring him to wait on you at any time that you shall be pleased to appoint. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Oxford, 11th June, 1783.

"Yesterday I came to Oxford without fatigue or inconvenience. I read in the coach before dinner. I dined moderately, and slept well; but find my breath not free this morning. Letters, vol. ii. p. 261, 262

"Dr. Edwards, to whom I wrote of my purpose to come, has defeated his own kindness by its excess. He has gone out of his own rooms for my reception; and therefore I cannot decently stay long, unless I can change my abode, which it will not be very easy to do: nor do I know what attractions I shall find here. Here is Miss Moore at Dr. Adams's, with whom I shall dine to-morrow."

"London, 13th June, 1783.

"Seward called on me yesterday. He is going only for a few weeks—first to Paris, and then to Flanders, to contemplate the

[1] ["When a tree is falling, I have seen the labourers, by a trivial jerk with a rope, throw it upon the spot where they would wish it to lie. Divines understanding this text too literally, pretend, by a little interposition in the article of death, to regulate a person's everlasting happiness. I fancy the allusion will hardly countenance their presumption." *Shenstone's Works*, v. ii. p. 297. The text not here accurately quoted, is in Ecclesiastes, c. xi. v. 3.—ED.]

[2] Now the celebrated Mrs. Crouch.—BOSWELL. [She died in October, 1805, æt. 45.—ED.]

[3] Mr. Windham was at this time in Dublin, secretary to the Earl of Northington, then lord lieutenant of Ireland.—BOSWELL.

[4] Son of Mr. Samuel Paterson.—BOSWELL. [Probably a brother of him mentioned *ante*, p. 183.—ED.

pictures of Claude Loraine; and he asked me if that was not as good a way as any of spending time—that time which returns no more—of which, however, a great part seems to be very foolishly spent, even by the wisest and the best.

"Poor Lawrence[1] and his youngest son died almost on the same day."]

My anxious apprehensions at parting with him this year proved to be but too well founded; for not long afterwards he had a dreadful stroke of the palsy, of which there are very full and accurate accounts in letters written by himself, to show with what composure of mind and resignation to the Divine Will his steady piety enabled him to behave.

"TO MR. EDMUND ALLEN.

"17th June, 1783.

"It has pleased God this morning to deprive me of the powers of speech; and as I do not know but that it may be his further good pleasure to deprive me soon of my senses, I request you will, on the receipt of this note, come to me, and act for me as the exigences of my case may require. I am sincerely yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

'TO THE REVEREND DR. JOHN TAYLOR.

"17th June, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—It has pleased GOD, by a paralytick stroke in the night, to deprive me of speech.

"I am very desirous of Dr. Heberden's assistance, as I think my case is not past remedy. Let me see you as soon as it is possible. Bring Dr. Heberden with you, if you can; but come yourself at all events. I am glad you are so well when I am so dreadfully attacked.

"I think that by a speedy application of stimulants much may be done. I question if a vomit, vigorous and rough, would not rouse the organs of speech to action. As it is too early to send, I will try to recollect what I can that can be suspected to have brought on this dreadful distress.

"I have been accustomed to bleed frequently for an asthmatick complaint; but have forborne for some time by Dr. Pepys's persuasion, who perceived my legs beginning to swell. I sometimes alleviate a painful, or, more properly, an oppressive constriction of my chest, by opiates; and have lately taken opium frequently; but the last, or two last times, in smaller quantities. My largest dose is three grains, and last night I took but two. You will suggest these things. (and they are all that I can call to mind) to Dr. Heberden. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Two days after he wrote thus to Mrs. Thrale[2]:

"On Monday, the 16th, I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted, I suppose, about half a minute. I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

"Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytick stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself, when it should come, would excite less horrour than seems now to attend it.

"In order to rouse the vocal organs, I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech, he left me my hand: I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

"I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand, to act as occasion should require. In penning this note I had some difficulty: my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden; and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour.

[1] [Dr. Lawrence, born in 1711, died in 1783, the 13th of June. His son, the Reverend J. Lawrence, died on the 15th. The *Biographical Dictionary* says that Johnson's Latin Ode to Dr. Lawrence was on the death of one of his sons, who died in India. It would rather appear to have been written on the *fatal* illness of this son; who, however, survived his father two days – ED.]

[2] Vol. ii. p. 268, of Mrs Thrale's Collection —BOSWELL.

My physicians are very friendly, and give me great hopes; but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty.

"TO MR. THOMAS DAVIES.
"18th June, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—I have had, indeed, a very heavy blow; but God, who yet spares my life, I humbly hope will spare my understanding and restore my speech. As I am not at all helpless, I want no particular assistance, but am strongly affected by Mrs. Davies's tenderness; and when I think she can do me good, shall be very glad to call upon her. I had ordered friends to be shut out; but one or two have found the way in; and if you come you shall be admitted; for I know not whom I can see that will bring more amusement on his tongue, or more kindness in his heart. I am, &c.
"SAM. JOHNSON."

It gives me great pleasure to preserve such a memorial of Johnson's regard for Mr. Davies, to whom I was indebted for my introduction to him [1]. He indeed loved Davies cordially, of which I shall give the following little evidence:—One day when he had treated him with too much asperity, Tom, who was not without pride and spirit, went off in a passion; but he had hardly reached home, when Frank, who had been sent after him, delivered this note: "Come, come, dear Davies, I am always sorry when we quarrel; send me word that we are friends."

["TO MRS. THRALE.
"London, 20th June, 1783.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 273. "You will forgive the gross images that disease must necessarily present. Dr. Lawrence said that medical treatises should be always in Latin.

* * * * * *

"I never had any distortion of the countenance but what Dr. Brocklesby called a little *prolapsus*, which went away the second day.

"I was this day directed to eat flesh, and I dined very copiously upon roasted lamb and boiled pease. I then went to sleep in a chair; and when I waked, I found Dr. Brocklesby sitting by me, and fell to talking with him in such a manner as made me glad, and I hope made me thankful. The doctor fell to repeating Juvenal's ninth satire; but I let him see that the province was mine.

"I am to take wine to-night, and hope it will do me good."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER
"London, 25th June, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—Since the papers have given an account of my illness, it is proper that I should give my friends some account of it myself. Pearson MSS.

"Very early in the morning of the 16th [2] of this month I perceived my speech taken from me. When it was light I sat down and wrote such directions as appeared proper. Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brocklesby were called. Blisters were applied, and medicines given. Before night I began to speak with some freedom, which has been increasing ever since, so that I have now very little impediment in my utterance. Dr. Heberden took his leave this morning.

"Since I received this stroke I have in other respects been better than I was before, and hope yet to have a comfortable summer. Let me have your prayers.

"If writing is not troublesome, let me know whether you are pretty well, and how you have passed the winter and spring.

"Make my compliments to all my friends. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON"

"TO MRS. THRALE.
London, 28th June, 1783.

"Your letter is just such as I desire, and as from you I hope always to deserve. Letters vol. ii. p. 280.

"The black [3] dog I hope always to resist, and in time to drive, though I am deprived of almost all those that used to help me. The neighbourhood is impoverished. I had once Richardson and Lawrence in my reach. Mrs. Allen is dead. My home has lost Levett; a man who took interest in every thing, and therefore ready at conversation. Mrs. Williams is so weak that she can be a companion no longer. When I rise, my breakfast is solitary; the black dog waits to share it. From breakfast to dinner he continues barking, except that Dr. Brocklesby for a little keeps him at a distance. Dinner with a sick woman you may venture to suppose not much better than solitary. After dinner, what remains but to count the clock, and hope for that sleep which I can scarce expect? Night comes at last, and some hours of restlessness and confusion bring me again to a day of solitude. What shall exclude the black dog from an habitation like this? If I were a little richer, I would perhaps take some cheerful female into the house. * * * *

[1] Poor Derrick, however, though he did not himself introduce me to Dr. Johnson as he promised, had the merit of introducing me to Davies, the immediate introductor.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Mistake for 17th.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 223.—ED.]

"Last night fresh flies were put to my head, and hindered me from sleeping. To-day I fancy myself incommoded with heat.

"I have, however, watered the garden both yesterday and to-day, just as I watered the laurels in the island"] [at Streatham.]

ED. [Amidst all this distress and danger, we find by the following and some subsequent letters to or concerning Mr. Lowe[1], that he was still ready to exert himself for his humble friend.

"TO MR. LOWE.

"Friday, 20th June, 1783.

MS. "SIR,—You know, I suppose, that a sudden illness makes it impracticable to me to wait on Mr. Barry, and the time is short. If it be your opinion that the end can be obtained by writing, I am very willing to write, and, perhaps, it may do as well: it is, at least, all that can be expected at present from, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"If you would have me write, come to me: I order your admission."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 3d July, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Your anxiety about my health is very friendly and very agreeable with your general kindness. I have indeed had a very frightful blow. On the 17th of last month, about three in the morning, as near as I can guess, I perceived myself almost totally deprived of speech. I had no pain. My organs were so obstructed that I could say *no*, but could scarcely say *yes*. I wrote the necessary directions, for it pleased God to spare my hand, and sent for Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brocklesby. Between the time in which I discovered my own disorder, and that in which I sent for the doctors, I had, I believe, in spite of my surprise and solicitude, a little sleep, and nature began to renew its operations. They came and gave the directions which the disease required, and from that time I have been continually improving in articulation. I can now speak; but the nerves are weak, and I cannot continue discourse long; but strength, I hope, will return. The physicians consider me as cured. I was last Sunday at church. On Tuesday I took an airing to Hampstead, and dined with the Club, where Lord Palmerston was proposed, and, against my opinion, was rejected[2]. I designed to go next week with Mr. Langton to Rochester, where I purpose to stay about ten days, and then try some other air. I have many kind invitations. Your brother has very frequently inquired after me. Most of my friends have, indeed, been very attentive. Thank dear Lord Hailes for his present.

"I hope you found at your return every thing gay and prosperous, and your lady, in particular, quite recovered and confirmed. Pay her my respects. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON"

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 3d July, 1783.

"Dr. Brocklesby yesterday dismissed the cantharides, and I can now find a soft place upon my pillow. Last night was cool, and I rested well, and this morning I have been a friend at a poetical difficulty. Here is now a glimpse of daylight again; but how near is the evening none can tell, and I will not prognosticate. We all know that from none of us it can be far distant: may none of us know this in vain!

Letters, vol. ii. p. 286.

"I went, as I took care to boast, on Tuesday to the Club, and hear that I was thought to have performed as well as usual.

"I dined on fish, with the wing of a small turkey-chick, and left roast beef, goose, and venison-pie untouched. I live much on pease, and never had them so good for so long a time in any year that I can remember.

* * * * * * *

"Along with your kind letter yesterday came one, likewise very kind, from the Astons at Lichfield; but I do not know whether, as the summer is so far advanced, I shall travel so far; though I am not without hopes that frequent change of air may fortify me against the winter, which has been, in modern phrase, of late years very *inimical* to, madam, your, &c."]

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 5th July, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—The account which you give of your health is but melancholy. May it please God to restore you. My disease affected my speech, and still continues, in some degree, to obstruct my utterance; my voice is distinct enough for a while, but the organs being still weak are quickly weary; but in other respects I am, I think, rather better than I have lately been, and can let you know my state without the help of any other hand.

"In the opinion of my friends, and in my own, I am gradually mending. The physicians consider me as cured, and I had leave four days ago to wash the cantharides from my head. Last Tuesday I dined at the Club.

[1] [Communicated by Mr. Markland from Mr. J. C. Freeling.—ED.]

[2] His lordship was soon after chosen, and is now a member of the Club.—BOSWELL.

"I am going next week into Kent, and purpose to change the air frequently this summer: whether I shall wander so far as Staffordshire I cannot tell. I should be glad to come. Return my thanks to Mrs. Cobb, and Mr. Pearson[1], and all that have shown attention to me.

"Let us, my dear, pray for one another, and consider our sufferings as notices mercifully given us to prepare ourselves for another state.

"I live now but in a melancholy way. My old friend Mr. Levett is dead, who lived with me in the house, and was useful and companionable; Mrs. Desmoulins is gone away; and Mrs. Williams is so much decayed, that she can add little to another's gratifications. The world passes away, and we are passing with it; but there is, doubtless, another world, which will endure for ever. Let us all fit ourselves for it. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Murph. Essay, p. 121. [During his illness Mr. Murphy visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson's Chemistry: articulating with difficulty, he said, "From this book he who knows nothing may learn a great deal, and he who knows will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing."]

Such was the general vigour of his constitution, that he resovered from this alarming and severe attack with wonderful quickness; so that in July he was able to make a visit to Mr. Langton at Rochester, where he passed about a fortnight, and made little excursions as easily as at any time of his life.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 8th July, 1783.

"Langton and I have talked of passing a little time at Rochester together, till neither knows well how to refuse; though I think he is not eager to take me, and I am not desirous to be taken. His family is numerous, and his house little. I have let him know, for his relief, that I do not mean to burden him more than a week. He is, however, among those who wish me well, and would exert what power he has to do me good."

"London, 23d July, 1783.

"I have been thirteen days at Rochester, and am now just returned. I came back by water in a common boat twenty miles for a shilling, and when I landed at Billingsgate I carried my budget myself to Cornhill before I could get a coach, and was not much incommoded."]

[Mr. Murphy states that in the month of August he set out for Lichfield on a visit to Miss Lucy Porter; and in his way back paid his respects to Dr. Adams, at Oxford. If the dates of the letters published by Mrs. Thrale be correct, it is hardly possible that he could have gone to Lichfield, and there is barely time for a short excursion to Oxford, where, however, it seems from the following letters, he certainly was about this period.] Murph. Essay p. 121. Ed.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 13th August, 1783.

"Of this world, in which you represent me as delighting to live, I can say little. Since I came home I have only been to church, once to Burney's, once to Paradise's, and once to Reynolds's. With Burney I saw Dr. Rose, his new relation, with whom I have been many years acquainted. If I discovered no reliques of disease, I am glad; but Fanny's trade is fiction[2]. Letters, vol. ii. p. 300.

"I have since partaken of an epidemical disorder; but common evils produce no dejection.

"Paradise's company, I fancy, disappointed him; I remember nobody. With Reynolds was the Archbishop of Tuam, a man coarse of voice and inelegant of language[3].

"I am now broken with disease, without the alleviation of familiar friendship or domestick society: I have no middle state between clamour and silence, between general conversation and self-tormenting solitude. Levett is dead, and poor Williams is making haste to die: I know not if she will ever come out of her chamber.

"I am now quite alone; but let me turn my tnoughts another way."

"TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"18th August, 1783.

"MY DEAREST DEAR,—I wish all that you have heard of my health were true; but be it as it may, if you will be pleased to name the day and hour when you would see me, I will be as punctual as I can. I am, madam, your most humble servant, Reyn. MSS

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 20th August, 1783.

"This has been a day of great emotion; the office of the communion for the sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. At Letters, vol. ii. p. 301.

[1] The Reverend Mr. Pearson, to whom Mrs. Lucy Porter bequeathed the greater part of her property.—MALONE.

[2] [Miss Fanny Burney, the celebrated novelist, had, it seems, given what Johnson feared was too favourable an account of him.—ED.]

[3] [Hon. Jos. Deane Bourke, afterwards Earl of Mayo.—ED.]

home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler. the man with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope hat all these admonitions will not be vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon eternal mercy.

"I read your last kind letter with great delight; but when I came to *love* and honour, what sprung in my mind?—How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

"I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time; and I sat for three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear*."

"TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"24th August, 1783.

Reyn. MSS. "DEAR MADAM,—When your letter came I was so engaged that I could not conveniently write. Whether I shall go to Salisbury I know not, for I have had no answer to my last letter; but I would not have you put off your journey, for all my motions are uncertain. I wish you a happy journey. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 26th August, 1783.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 303. "Things stand with me much as they have done for some time. Mrs. Williams fancies now and then that she grows better, but her vital powers appear to be slowly burning out. Nobody thinks, however, that she will very soon be quite wasted; and as she suffers me to be of very little use to her, I have determined to pass some time with Mr. Bowles, near Salisbury, and have taken a place for Thursday.

"Some benefit may be perhaps received from change of air, some from change of company, and some from mere change of place. It is not easy to grow well in a chamber where one has long been sick, and where every thing seen, and every person speaking, revives and impresses images of pain. Though it be true that no man can run away from himself, yet he may escape from many causes of useless uneasiness. That *the mind is its own place* is the boast of a fallen angel that had learned to lie.[1] External locality has great effects, at least upon all embodied beings. I hope this little journey will afford me at least some suspense of melancholy."]

[1] ["Paradise Lost," book i. line 254.—ED.]

Toward the end of August he went as far as the neighbourhood of Salisbury, to Heale, the seat of William Bowles, Esq., a gentleman whom I have heard him praise for exemplary religious order in his family. In his diary I find a short but honourable mention of this visit:—"August 28, I came to Heale without fatigue. 30. I am entertained quite to my mind."

"TO DR. BROCKLESBY.

"Heale, near Salisbury, 29th August, 1783

"DEAR SIR,—Without appearing to want a just sense of your kind attention, I cannot omit to give an account of the day which seemed to appear in some sort perilous. I rose at five, and went out at six; and having reached Salisbury about nine, went forward a few miles in my friend's chariot. I was no more wearied with the journey, though it was a high-hung, rough coach, than I should have been forty years ago. We shall now see what air will do. The country is all a plain; and the house in which I am, so far as I can judge from my window, for I write before I have left my chamber, is sufficiently pleasant.

"Be so kind as to continue your attention to Mrs. Williams. It is great consolation to the well, and still greater to the sick, that they find themselves not neglected; and I know that you will be desirous of giving comfort, even where you have no great hope of giving help.

"Since I wrote the former part of the letter, I find that by the course of the post I cannot send it before the thirty-first. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

While he was here, he had a letter from Dr. Brocklesby, acquainting him of the death of Mrs. Williams, which affected him a good deal. Though for several years her temper had not been complacent, she had valuable qualities, and her departure left a blank in his house. Upon this occasion he, according to his habitual course of piety, composed a prayer[2]

["DR. BROCKLESBY TO DR. JOHNSON.

"6th September, 1783.

"Mrs. Williams, from mere inanition, has at length paid the great debt to nature about three o'clock this morning. She died without a struggle, retaining her faculties entire to the very last; and, as she expressed it, having set her house in order, was prepared to leave it at the last summons of nature."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 22d Sept. 1783.

"Poor Williams has, I hope, seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence,

[2] Prayers and Meditations, p. 226.—BOSWELL.

and she bore with fortitude She has left me.

Thou thy weary task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages[1].

"Had she had good humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity school."]

I shall here insert a few particulars concerning him, with which I have been favoured by one of his friends.

"He had once conceived the design of writing the Life of Oliver Cromwell, saying, that he thought it must be highly curious to trace his extraordinary rise to the supreme power from so obscure a beginning. He at length laid aside his scheme, on discovering that all that can be told of him is already in print; and that it is impracticable to procure any authentick information in addition to what the world is already in possession of[2].

"He had likewise projected, but at what part of his life is not known, a work to show how small a quantity of REAL FICTION there is in the world; and that the same images, with very little variation, have served all the authours who have ever written."

"His thoughts in the latter part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased friends. He often muttered these or such like sentences: 'Poor man! and then he died.'"

"Speaking of a certain literary friend, 'He is a very pompous puzzling fellow,' said he: 'he lent me a letter once that somebody had written to him, no matter what it was about; but he wanted to have the letter back, and expressed a mighty value for it: he hoped it was to be met with again; he would not lose it for a thousand pounds. I laid my hand upon it soon afterwards, and gave it him. I believe I said I was very glad to have met with it. O, then he did not know that it signified any thing. So you see, when the letter was lost it was worth a thousand pounds, and when it was found it was not worth a farthing.'"

"The style and character of his conversation is pretty generally known: it was certainly conducted in conformity with a precept of Lord Bacon, but it is not clear, I apprehend, that this conformity was either perceived or intended by Johnson. The precept alluded to is as follows: 'In all kinds of speech, either pleasant, grave, severe, or ordinary, it is convenient to speak leisurely, and rather drawlingly than hastily: because hasty speech confounds the memory, and oftentimes, besides the unseemliness, drives a man either to stammering, a nonplus, or harping on that which should follow; whereas a slow speech confirmeth the memory, addeth a conceit of wisdom to the hearers, besides a seemliness of speech and countenance[3].' Dr. Johnson's method of conversation was certainly calculated to excite attention, and to amuse and instruct (as it happened), without wearying or confusing his company. He was always most perfectly clear and conspicuous; and his language was so accurate, and his sentences so neatly constructed, that his conversation might have been all printed without any correction. At the same time, it was easy and natural; the accuracy of it had no appearance of labour, constraint, or stiffness: he seemed more correct than others by the force of habit, and the customary exercises of his powerful mind."

"He spoke often in praise of French literature. 'The French are excellent in this, he would say, 'they have a book on every subject.' From what he had seen of them he denied them the praise of superior politeness, and mentioned, with very visible disgust, the custom they have of spitting on the floors of their apartments. 'This,' said the Doctor, 'is as gross a thing as can well be done; and one wonders how any man, or set of men, can persist in so offensive a practice for a whole day together: one should expect that the first effort towards civilization would remove it even among savages.'"

"Baxter's 'Reasons of the Christian Religion' he thought contained the best collection of the evidences of the divinity of the Christian system."

"Chymistry was always an interesting pursuit with Dr. Johnson. Whilst he was in Wiltshire, he attended some experiments that were made by a physician at Salisbury on the new kinds of air. In the course of

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1 [Dirge in Cymbeline.—ED.]

2 Mr. Malone observes, "This, however, was entirely a mistake, as appears from the Memoirs published by Mr. Noble. Had Johnson been furnished with the materials which the industry of that gentleman has procured, and with others which it is believed are yet preserved in manuscript, he would, without doubt, have produced a most valuable and curious history of Cromwell's life."—BOSWELL. I may add, that, had Johnson given us a Life of Cromwell, we should not have been disgusted in numberless instances with—"My Lord Protector" and "My Lady PROTECTRESS;" and certainly the brutal ruffian who presided in the bloody assembly that murdered their sovereign would have been characterised by very different epithets than those which are applied to him in this work, where we find him described as "the BOLD *and* DETERMINED Bradshaw."—MALONE.

3 Hints for Civil Conversation.—*Brown's Works*, 4to. vol. i. p. 571.—MALONE.

the experiments frequent mention being made of Dr. Priestley, Dr. Johnson knit his brows, and in a stern manner inquired, 'Why do we hear so much of Dr. Priestley[1]?' He was very properly answered, 'Sir, because we are indebted to him for these important discoveries.' On this Dr. Johnson appeared well content; and replied, 'Well, well, I believe we are; and let every man have the honour he has merited.'"

"A friend was one day, about two years before his death, struck with some instance of Dr. Johnson's great candour. 'Well, sir,' said he, 'I will always say that you are a very candid man.' 'Will you?' replied the Doctor; 'I doubt then you will be very singular. But, indeed, sir,' continued he, 'I look upon myself to be a man very much misunderstood. I am not an uncandid, nor am I a severe man. I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest; and people are apt to believe me serious: however, I am more candid than I was when I was younger. As I know more of mankind, I expect less of them, and am ready now to call a man *a good man* upon easier terms than I was formerly.'"

On his return from Heale he wrote to Dr. Burney:

"I came home on the 18th of September, at noon, to a very disconsolate house. You and I have lost our friends; but you have more friends at home. My domestick companion is taken from me. She is much missed, for her acquisitions were many, and her curiosity universal; so that she partook of every conversation. I am not well enough to go much out; and to sit, and eat, or fast alone, is very wearisome. I always mean to send my compliments to all the ladies."

[As Mrs. Williams enjoyed a pension from Mrs. Montagu, Johnson thought himself bound to acquaint her with the death of the object of her charity. Ed

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"22d September, 1783

"MADAM,—That respect which is always due to beneficence makes it fit that you should be informed, otherwise than by the papers, that, on the 6th of this month, died your pensioner, Anna Williams, of whom it may be truly said, that she received your bounty with gratitude, and enjoyed it with propriety. You perhaps have still her prayers. Mont MS.

"You have, madam, the satisfaction of having alleviated the sufferings of a woman

[1] I do not wonder at Johnson's displeasure when the name of Dr. Priestley was mentioned; for I know no writer who has been suffered to publish more pernicious doctrines. I shall instance only three. First, *Materialism;* by which *mind* is denied to human nature; which, if believed, must deprive us of every elevated principle. Secondly, *Necessity;* or the doctrine that every action, whether good or bad, is included in an unchangeable and unavoidable system; a notion utterly subversive of moral government. Thirdly, that we have no reason to think that the *future* world (which, as he is pleased to *inform* us, will be adapted to our *merely improved* nature) will be materially different from *this;* which, if believed, would sink wretched mortals into despair, as they could no longer hope for the "rest that remaineth for the people of God," or for that happiness which is revealed to us as something beyond our present conceptions, but would feel themselves doomed to a continuation of the uneasy state under which they now groan. I say nothing of the petulant intemperance with which he dares to insult the venerable establishments of his country. As a specimen of his writings, I shall quote the following passage, which appears to me equally absurd and impious, and which might have been retorted upon him by the men who were prosecuted for burning his house. "I cannot," says he, "as a *necessarian* [meaning *necessitarian*], hate *any man;* because I consider him as *being*, in all respects, just what God has *made him to be;* and also as *doing*, *with respect to me*, nothing but what he was *expressly designed* and *appointed* to do: God being the *only cause*, and men nothing more than the *instruments* in his hands to *execute all his pleasures.*"—*Illustrations of Philosophical Necessity*, p. 111. The Reverend Dr. Parr, in a late tract, appears to suppose that *Dr. Johnson not only endured, but almost solicited, an interview with Dr. Priestley.* In justice to Dr. Johnson, I declare my firm belief that he never did. My illustrious friend was particularly resolute in not giving countenance to men whose writings he considered as pernicious to society. I was present at Oxford when Dr. Price, even before he had rendered himself so generally obnoxious by his zeal for the French Revolution, came into a company where Johnson was, who instantly left the room. Much more would he have reprobated Dr. Priestley. Whoever wishes to see a perfect delineation of this *Literary Jack of all Trades* may find it in an ingenious tract, entitled "*A Small Whole-Length of Dr. Priestley*," printed for Rivingtons, in St. Paul's Churchyard.—Boswell. [The foregoing note produced a reply from Dr. Parr (*Gent. Mag.* March, 1795), in which he endeavoured to support his assertion by evidence, which, however, really contradicted him. For instead of Johnson's having *solicited an interview* (which was the point in dispute), Dr. Parr is obliged to admit that the meeting was at Mr. Paradise's *dinner table*, that Dr. Johnson did not *solicit the interview*, but was aware that Dr. Priestley was invited, and that he behaved to him with civility: and then Dr. Parr concludes, in a way that does little credit either to his accuracy or his candour, "Should Mr. Boswell be pleased to maintain that Dr Johnson rather *consented* to the interview, than *almost solicited it*, I shall not object to the change of expression."—Ed.]

of great merit, both intellectual and moral. Her curiosity was universal, her knowledge was very extensive, and she sustained forty years of misery with steady fortitude. Thirty years and more she had been my companion, and her death has left me very desolate.

"That I have not written sooner, you may impute to absence, to ill health, to any thing rather than want of regard to the benefactress of my departed friend. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

His fortitude and patience met with severe trials during this year. The stroke of the palsy has been related circumstantially; but he was also afflicted with the gout, and was besides troubled with a complaint which not only was attended with immediate inconvenience, but threatened him with a chirurgical operation, from which most men would shrink. The complaint was a *sarcocele*, which Johnson bore with uncommon firmness, and was not at all frightened while he looked forward to amputation. He was attended by Mr. Pott and Mr. Cruikshank. I have before me a letter of the 30th of July, this year, to Mr. Cruikshank, in which he says, "I am going to put myself into your hands:" and another, accompanying a set of his "Lives of the Poets," in which he says, "I beg your acceptance of these volumes, as an acknowledgment of the great favours which you have bestowed on, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant." I have in my possession several more letters from him to Mr. Cruikshank, and also to Dr. Mudge at Plymouth, which it would be improper to insert, as they are filled with unpleasing technical details. I shall, however, extract from his letters to Dr. Mudge such passages as show either a felicity of expression, or the undaunted state of his mind.

"My conviction of your skill, and my belief of your friendship, determine me to entreat your opinion and advice."

"In this state I with great earnestness desire you to tell me what is to be done. Excision is doubtless necessary to the cure, and I know not any means of palliation. The operation is doubtless painful; but is it dangerous? The pain I hope to endure with decency; but I am loath to put life into much hazard."

"By representing the gout as an antagonist to the palsy, you have said enough to make it welcome. This is not strictly the first fit, but I hope it is as good as the first; for it is the second that ever confined me; and the first was ten years ago, much less fierce and fiery than this."

"Write, dear sir, what you can to inform or encourage me. The operation is not delayed by any fears or objections of mine."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"London, 29th Sept. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—You may very reasonably charge me with insensibility of your kindness and that of Lady Rothes, since I have suffered so much time to pass without paying any acknowledgment. I now, at last, return my thanks; and why I did it not sooner I ought to tell you. I went into Wiltshire as soon as I well could, and was there much employed in palliating my own malady. Disease produces much selfishness. A man in pain is looking after ease, and lets most other things go as chance shall dispose of them. In the mean time I have lost a companion[1], to whom I have had recourse for domestick amusement for thirty years, and whose variety of knowledge never was exhausted; and now return to a habitation vacant and desolate. I carry about a very troublesome and dangerous complaint, which admits no cure but by the chirurgical knife. Let me have your prayers. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Happily the complaint abated without his being put to the torture of amputation. But we must surely admire the manly resolution which he discovered while it hung over him.

In a letter to the same gentleman he writes, "The gout has within these four days come upon me with a violence which I never experienced before. It made me helpless as an infant." And in another, having mentioned Mrs. Williams, he says,—"whose death following that of Levett has now made my house a solitude. She left her little substance to a charity-school. She is, I hope, where there is neither darkness[2], nor want, nor sorrow."

I wrote to him, begging to know the state of his health, and mentioned that "Baxter's Anacreon, which is in the library at Auchinleck, was, I find, collated by my father in 1727 with the MS. belonging to the University of Leyden, and he has made a number of notes upon it. Would you advise me to publish a new edition of it?"

His answer was dated September 30.

"You should not make your letters such rarities, when you know, or might know, the uniform state of my health. It is very long since I heard from you; and that I have not answered is a very insufficient reason for the silence of a friend. Your Anacreon is a very uncommon book: neither London nor Cambridge can supply a copy of that edition. Whether it should be reprinted, you cannot do better than consult

1 Mrs. Williams.—BOSWELL.

2 [An allusion to her *blindness*.· ED.]

Lord Hailes. Besides my constant and radical disease, I have been for these ten days much harassed with the gout; but that has now remitted. I hope God will yet grant me a little longer life, and make me less unfit to appear before him."

["TO MR. TOMKESON, IN SOUTHAMPTON-STREET, COVENT GARDEN [1].

"1st October, 1783.

"SIR,—I have known Mr. Lowe very familiarly a great while. I consider him as a man of very clear and vigorous understanding, and conceive his principles to be such that, whatever you transact with him, you have nothing to expect from him unbecoming a gentleman. I am, sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"1st October, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am very ill indeed, and to my former illness is superadded the gout. I am now without shoes, and I have lately been almost motionless. Reyn. MS.

"To my other afflictions is added solitude. Mrs. Williams, a companion of thirty years, is gone. It is a comfort to me to have you near me I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 6th October, 1783.

"I yet sit without shoes, with my foot upon a pillow, but my pain and weakness are much abated, and I am no longer crawling upon two sticks. To the gout my mind is reconciled by another letter from Mr. Mudge, in which he vehemently urges the excision, and tells me that the gout will secure me from every thing paralytick: if this be true, I am ready to say to the arthritick pains, *Deh! venite ogne di, durate, un anno* [2]. Letters, vol. ii. p 313.

"My physician in ordinary is Dr. Brocklesby, who comes almost every day; my surgeon, in Mr. Pott's absence, is Mr. Cruikshank, the present reader in Dr. Hunter's school. Neither of them, however, do much more than look and talk. The general health of my body is as good as you have ever known it—almost as good as I can remember.

"The carriage which you supposed made rough by my weakness was the common Salisbury stage, high hung, and driven to Salisbury in a day. I was not fatigued.

"Mr. Pott has been out of town, but I expect to see him soon, and will then tell you something of the main affair, of which there seems now to be a better prospect.

"This afternoon I have given [tea] to Mrs. Cholmondeley, Mrs. Way, Lady Sheffield's relation, Mr. Kindersley, the describer of Indian manners, and another anonymous lady.

"As Mrs. Williams received a pension from Mrs. Montagu, it was fit to notify her death. The account has brought me a letter not only civil but tender; so I hope peace is proclaimed."

"London, 9th October, 1783.

"Two nights ago Mr. Burke sat with me a long time. He seems much pleased with his journey. We had both seen Stonehenge this summer for the first time. I told him that the view had enabled me to confute two opinions which have been advanced about it. One, that the materials are not natural stones, but an artificial composition hardened by time. This notion is as old as Camden's time; and has this strong argument to support it, that stone of that species is nowhere to be found. The other opinion, advanced by Dr. Charlton, is, that it was erected by the Danes.

"Mr. Bowles made me observe, that the transverse stones were fixed on the perpendicular supporters by a knob formed on the top of the upright stone, which entered into a hollow cut in the crossing stone. This is a proof that the enormous edifice was raised by a people who had not yet the knowledge of mortar [3]; which cannot be supposed of the Danes, who came hither in ships, and were not ignorant certainly of the arts of life. This proves also the stones not to be factitious; for they that could mould such durable masses could do much more than make mortar, and could have continued the transverse from the upright part with the same paste.

"You have doubtless seen Stonehenge; and if you have not, I should think it a hard task to make an adequate description.

"It is in my opinion to be referred to the earliest habitation of the island, as a druidical monument of, at least, two thousand years; probably the most ancient work of man upon the island. Salisbury cathedral and its neighbour Stonehenge are two eminent monuments of art and rudeness, and may show the first essay and the last perfection in architecture."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"23d October, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—Instead of having me at your table, which cannot, I fear, quickly happen, come, if you Reyn MS.

1 [Communicated by Mr. J. C. Freeling.—ED.]

2 [See *ante*, p. 115.—ED.]

3 [Surely not. We who have the use of mortar use what are called *mortices*; similar in principle at least to the *knobs* and *hollows* of Stonehenge.—ED.]

can, to dine this day with me. It will give pleasure to a sick friend.

"Let me know whether you can come. I am, madam, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"London, 27th October, 1783.

"MY DEAREST DEAR,—I am able enough to write, for I have now neither sickness nor pain; only the gout has left my ankles somewhat weak.

"While the weather favours you, and the air does you good, stay in the country: when you come home I hope we shall often see one another, and enjoy that friendship to which no time is likely to put an end on the part of, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

He this autumn received a visit from the celebrated Mrs. Siddons. He gives this account of it in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale.

"27th October.

"Mrs. Siddons, in her visit to me, behaved with great modesty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be censured or despised. Neither praise nor money, the two powerful corruptors of mankind, seem to have depraved her. I shall be glad to see her again. Her brother Kemble[1] calls on me, and pleases me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays; and she told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of Constance, Catharine, and Isabella[2], in Shakspeare."

Mr. Kemble has favoured me with the following minute of what passed at this visit:

"When Mrs. Siddons came into the room, there happened to be no chair ready for her, which he observing said, with a smile, 'Madam, you who so often occasion a want of seats to other people will the more easily excuse the want of one yourself.

"Having placed himself by her, he, with great good-humour, entered upon a consideration of the English drama; and, among other inquiries, particularly asked her which of Shakspeare's characters she was most pleased with. Upon her answering that she thought the character of Queen Catharine, in Henry the Eighth, the most natural: 'I think so too, madam,' said he; 'and whenever you perform it, I will once more hobble out to the theatre myself.' Mrs. Siddons promised she would do herself the honour of acting his favourite part for him; but many circumstances happened to prevent the representation of King Henry the Eighth during the Doctor's life[3].

"In the course of the evening he thus gave his opinion upon the merits of some of the principal performers whom he remembered to have seen upon the stage. 'Mrs. Porter in the vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive in the sprightliness of humour, I have never seen equalled. What Clive did best, she did better than Garrick; but could not do half so many things well: she was a better romp than any I ever saw in nature. Pritchard, in common life, was a vulgar idiot; she would talk of her *gownd:* but, when she appeared upon the stage, seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding. I once talked with Colley Cibber, and thought him ignorant of the principles of his art. Garrick, madam, was no declaimer; there was not one of his own scene-shifters who could not have spoken *To be or not to be* better than he did: yet he was the only actor I ever saw, whom I could call a master both in tragedy and comedy; though I liked him best in comedy. A true conception of character, and natural expression of it, were his distinguished excellences.' Having expatiated, with his usual force and eloquence, on Mr. Garrick's extraordinary eminence as an actor, he concluded with this compliment to his social talents: 'And after all, madam, I thought him less to be envied on the stage than at the head of a table.'"

Johnson, indeed, had thought more upon the subject of acting than might be generally supposed. Talking of it one day to Mr. Kemble, he said, "Are you, sir, one of those enthusiasts who believe yourself transformed into the very character you represent?" Upon Mr. Kemble's answering that he had never felt so strong a persuasion himself; "To be sure not, sir," said Johnson; "the thing is impossible. And if Garrick really believed himself to be that monster, Richard the Third, he deserved to be hanged every time he performed it[4]."

[1] [This great actor and amiable and accomplished man left the stage in 18—, and died 26th February, 1823, at Lausanne. In his own day he had no competitor in any walk of tragedy; and those who remembered Barry, Mossop, Henderson, and Garrick admitted, that in characters of high tragic dignity, such as Hamlet, Coriolanus, Alexander, Cato, he excelled all his predecessors, almost as much as his sister did all actresses in the female characters of the same heroic class.—ED.]

[2] [Isabella in Shakspeare's *Measure for Measure.* Mrs. Siddons had made her first appearance in Isabella in The Fatal Marriage.—ED.]

[3] [It was played many years after with critical attention to historical accuracy, and with great success. Mrs. Siddons played Catharine; Mr. Kemble, Wolsey; Mr. Charles Kemble, Cromwell. There is a very interesting picture, by Harlow (since engraved), of the trial-scene, with portraits of all the performers.—ED.]

[4] [Mr. Kemble told the Editor that the occa-

My worthy friend, Mr. John Nichols, was present when Mr. Henderson, the actor, paid a visit to Dr. Johnson, and was received in a very courteous manner[1].

I found among Dr. Johnson's papers the following letter to him, from the celebrated Mrs. Bellamy[2]:

"TO DR. JOHNSON.

"No. 10 Duke-street, St. James's, 11th May, 1783.

"SIR,—The flattering remembrance of the partiality you honoured me with some years ago, as well as the humanity you are known to possess, has encouraged me to solicit your patronage at my benefit.

"By a long chancery suit, and a complicated train of unfortunate events, I am reduced to the greatest distress; which obliges me, once more, to request the indulgence of the publick.

"Give me leave to solicit the honour of your company, and to assure you, if you grant my request, the gratification I shall feel from being patronized by Dr. Johnson will be infinitely superiour to any advantage that may arise from the benefit; as I am, with the profoundest respect, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

"G. A. BELLAMY."

I am happy in recording these particulars, which prove that my illustrious friend lived to think much more favourably of players than he appears to have done in the early part of his life[3].

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 10th Nov. 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—The death of poor Mr. Porter, of which your maid has sent an account, must have very much surprised you. The death of a friend is almost always unexpected: we do not love to think of it, and therefore are not prepared for its coming. He was, I think, a religious man, and therefore that his end was happy.

"Death has likewise visited my mournful habitation. Last month died Mrs. Williams, who had been to me for thirty years in the place of a sister: her knowledge was great and her conversation pleasing. I now live in cheerless solitude.

"My two last years have passed under the pressure of successive diseases. I have lately had the gout with some severity. But I wonderfully escaped the operation which I mentioned, and am upon the whole restored to health beyond my own expectation.

"As we daily see our friends die round us, we that are left must cling closer, and, if we can do nothing more, at least pray for one another; and remember, that as others die we must die too, and prepare ourselves diligently for the last great trial. I am, madam, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 13th November, 1783.

"Since you have written to me with the attention and tenderness of ancient time[4], your letters give me a great part of the pleasure which a life of solitude admits. You will never bestow any share of your good-will on one who deserves better. Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may by a single blast of coldness be extinguished; but that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may for a while be depressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard and every thing seen recalls some pleasure communicated or some benefit conferred, some petty quarrel or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week, but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost; but an *old friend* never can be found, and nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 325.

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"You seem to mention Lord Kilmurrey[5] as a stranger. We were at his house in Cheshire; and he one day dined with Sir Lynch. What he tells of the epigram is not true, but perhaps he does not know it to be false. Do not you remember how he rejoiced in having *no* park!—he could not disoblige his neighbours by sending them *no* venison."]

A pleasing instance of the generous at-

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sion on which he had felt himself the most affected—the most personally touched—was in playing the last scene of The Stranger with Mrs. Siddons. Her pathos, he said, in that part always overcame him.—ED.]

[1] See *Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1791.—BOSWELL.

[2] [An actress who published memoirs of her life.—ED.]

[3] [Johnson's dislike to players in early life was nothing more than his jealousy of Garrick's sudden elevation. After Garrick's death he began "to think more favourably of them."—ED.]

[4] [This is the first letter in which we perceive a serious coldness towards Mrs. Thrale, but it is clear that it had existed some time prior to this date, though it certainly had not been so early as Mr. Boswell supposed.—ED.]

[5] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 481, and p. 190 of this vol.—ED.]

tention of one of his friends has been discovered by the publication of Mrs. Thrale's Collection of Letters. In a letter to one of the Miss Thrales, he writes, "A
p. 328. friend, whose name I will tell when your mamma has tried to guess it, sent to my physician to inquire whether this long train of illness had brought me into difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to send to him for what occasion required. I shall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow." And afterwards, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale,
p 342. "Since you cannot guess, I will tell you, that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I returned him a very thankful and respectful letter."

I applied to Mr. Hamilton, by a common friend, and he has been so obliging as to let me have Johnson's letter to him upon this occasion, to adorn my collection.

"TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON.

"19th November, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Your kind inquiries after my affairs, and your generous offers, have been communicated to me by Dr. Brocklesby. I return thanks with great sincerity, having lived long enough to know what gratitude is due to such friendship; and entreat that my refusal may not be imputed to sullenness or pride. I am, indeed, in no want. Sickness is, by the generosity of my physicians, of little expense to me. But if any unexpected exigence should press me, you shall see, dear sir, how cheerfully I can be obliged to so much liberality. I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

I find in this, as in former years, notices of his kind attention to Mrs. Gardiner, who, though in the humble station of a tallow-chandler upon Snow-hill, was a woman of excellent good sense, pious, and charitable[1]. She told me she had been introduced to him by Mrs. Masters[2], the poetess, whose volumes he revised, and, it is said, illuminated here and there with a ray of his own genius. Mrs. Gardiner was very zealous for the support of the ladies' charity-school, in the parish of St. Sepulchre. It is confined to females; and, I am told, it afforded a hint for the story of "Betty Broom" in "The Idler." Johnson this year, I find, obtained for it a sermon from the late Bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. Shipley, whom he, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, characterises as "knowing and conversable;" and whom all who knew his lordship, even those who differed from him in politicks, remember with much respect.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"27th November, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—I beg that you will let me know by this messenger whether you will do me the honour of dining with me, and, if you will, whether we shall eat our dinner by our own selves, or call Mrs. Desmoulins. I am, dearest dear your most humble servant, Reyn MS.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

The Earl of Carlisle having written a tragedy, entitled "The Father's Revenge," some of his lordship's friends applied to Mrs. Chapone[3], to prevail on Dr. Johnson to read and give his opinion of it, which he accordingly did, in a letter to that lady. Sir Joshua Reynolds having informed me that this letter was in Lord Carlisle's possession, though I was not fortunate enough to have the honour of being known to his lordship, trusting to the general courtesy of literature, I wrote to him, requesting the favour of a copy of it[4], and to be permitted to insert it in my Life of Dr. Johnson. His lordship was so good as to comply with my request, and has thus enabled me to enrich my work with a very fine piece of writing, which displays both the critical skill and politeness of my illustrious friend; and perhaps the curiosity which it will excite may induce the noble and elegant authour to gratify the world by the publication of a performance of which Dr. Johnson has spoken in such terms

"TO MRS. CHAPONE.

"28th November, 1783.

"MADAM,—By sending the tragedy to me a second time[5], I think that a very honourable distinction has been shown me; and I did not delay the perusal, of which I am now to tell the effect.

"The construction of the play is not completely regular: the stage is too often vacant, and the scenes are not sufficiently connected. This, however, would be called by Dryden only a mechanical defect; which takes away little from the power of the poem, and which is seen rather than felt.

"A rigid examiner of the diction might, perhaps, wish some words changed, and some lines more vigorously terminated.

[1] In his will Dr. Johnson left her a book "at her election, to keep as a token of remembrance."—MALONE. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 102. She died in 1789, æt. 74.—ED.]

[2] [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 102.—ED.]

[3] [Miss Mulso. See *ante*, p. 239.—ED.]

[4] A few copies only of this tragedy have been printed, and given to the authour's friends.—BOSWELL.

[5] Dr. Johnson having been very ill when the tragedy was first sent to him, had declined the consideration of it.—BOSWELL.

But from such petty imperfections what writer was ever free?

"The general form and force of the dialogue is of more importance. It seems to want that quickness of reciprocation which characterises the English drama, and is not always sufficiently fervid or animated.

"Of the sentiments, I remember not one that I wished omitted. In the imagery I cannot forbear to distinguish the comparison of joy succeeding grief to light rushing on the eye accustomed to darkness[1]. It seems to have all that can be desired to make it please. It is new, just, and delightful.

"With the characters, either as conceived or preserved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulate a writer who, in defiance of prejudice and fashion, made the archbishop a good man, and scorned all thoughtless applause, which a vicious churchman would have brought him.

"The catastrophe is affecting. The father and daughter both culpable, both wretched, and both penitent, divide between them our pity and our sorrow.

"Thus, madam, I have performed what I did not willingly undertake, and could not decently refuse. The noble writer will be pleased to remember that sincere criticism ought to raise no resentment, because judgment is not under the control of will; but involuntary criticism, as it has still less of choice, ought to be more remote from possibility of offence. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 29th Nov. 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—You may perhaps think me negligent that I have not written to you again upon the loss of your brother; but condolences and consolations are such common and such useless things, that the omission of them is no great crime; and my own diseases occupy my mind and engage my care. My nights are miserably restless, and my days, therefore, are heavy. I try, however, to hold up my head as high as I can.

"I am sorry that you health is impaired: perhaps the spring and the summer may, in some degree, restore it; but if not, we must submit to the inconveniences of time, as to the other dispensations of Eternal Goodness. Pray for me, and write to me, or let Mr. Pearson write for you. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] "I could have borne my woes; that stranger Joy
Wounds while it smiles:—the long-imprison'd wretch,
Emerging from the night of his damp cell,
Shrinks from the sun's bright beams; and that which flings
Gladness o'er all to him is agony."—BOSWELL.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"23d December, 1783

"DEAREST MADAM,—You shall doubtless be very welcome to me on Christmas day. I shall not dine alone, but the company will all be people whom we can stay with or leave. I will expect you at three, if I hear no more. I am this day a little better. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, Reyn. MS.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"I mean, do not be later than three; for as I am afraid I shall not be at church, you cannot come too soon."

I consulted him on two questions of a very different nature: one, Whether the unconstitutional influence exercised by the peers of Scotland in the election of the representatives of the commons, by means of fictitious qualifications, ought not to be resisted; the other, What in propriety and humanity should be done with old horses unable to labour. I gave him some account of my life at Auchinleck; and expressed my satisfaction that the gentlemen of the county had, at two publick meetings, elected me their *præses* or chairman.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 24th Dec. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Like all other men who have great friends, you begin to feel the pangs of neglected merit; and all the comfort that I can give you is, by telling you that you have probably more pangs to feel, and more neglect to suffer. You have, indeed, begun to complain too soon, and I hope I am the only confidant of your discontent. Your friends have not yet had leisure to gratify personal kindness; they have hitherto been busy in strengthening their ministerial interest. If a vacancy happens in Scotland, give them early intelligence: and as you can serve government as powerfully as any of your probable competitors, you may make in some sort a warrantable claim.

"Of the exaltations and depressions of your mind you delight to talk, and I hate to hear. Drive all such fancies from you.

"On the day when I received your letter, I think, the foregoing page was written; to which one disease or another has hindered me from making any additions. I am now a little better. But sickness and solitude press me very heavily. I could bear sickness better, if I were relieved from solitude.

"The present dreadful confusion of the publick ought to make you wrap yourself up in your hereditary possessions, which, though less than you may wish, are more than you can want; and in an hour of religious retirement return thanks to God

who has exempted you from any strong temptation to faction, treachery, plunder, and disloyalty.

"As your neighbours distinguish you by such honours as they can bestow, content yourself with your station, without neglecting your profession. Your estate and the courts will find you full employment, and your mind well occupied will be quiet.

"The usurpation of the nobility, for they apparently usurp all the influence they gain by fraud and misrepresentation, I think it certainly lawful, perhaps your duty, to resist. What is not their own, they have only by robbery.

"Your question about the horses gives me more perplexity. I know not well what advice to give you. I can only recommend a rule which you do not want: give as little pain as you can. I suppose that we have a right to their service while their strength lasts; what we can do with them afterwards, I cannot so easily determine. But let us consider. Nobody denies that man has a right first to milk the cow, and to shear the sheep, and then to kill them for his table. May he not, by parity of reason, first work a horse, and then kill him the easiest way, that he may have the means of another horse, or food for cows and sheep? Man is influenced in both cases by different motives of self-interest. He that rejects the one must reject the other. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"A happy and pious Christmas; and many happy years to you, your lady, and children."

The late ingenious Mr. Mickle, some time before his death, wrote me a letter concerning Dr. Johnson, in which he mentions, "I was upwards of twelve years acquainted with him, was frequently in his company, always talked with ease to him, and can truly say, that I never received from him one rough word."

In this letter he relates his having, while engaged in translating the Lusiad, had a dispute of considerable length with Johnson, who, as usual, declaimed upon the misery and corruption of a sea life, and used this expression:—"It had been happy for the world, sir, if your hero Gama, Prince Henry of Portugal, and Columbus, had never been born, or that their schemes had never gone farther than their own imaginations." "This sentiment," says Mr. Mickle, "which is to be found in his 'Introduction to the World Displayed,' I, in my Dissertation prefixed to the Lusiad, have controverted; and though authours are said to be bad judges of their own works, I am not ashamed to own to a friend, that that dissertation is my favourite above all that I ever attempted in prose. Next year, when the Lusiad was published, I waited on Dr. Johnson, who addressed me with one of his good-humoured smiles:—'Well, you have remembered our dispute about Prince Henry, and have cited me too. You have done your part very well indeed: you have made the best of your argument; but I am not convinced yet.'

"Before publishing the Lusiad, I sent Mr. Hoole a proof of that part of the introduction in which I make mention of Dr. Johnson, yourself, and other well-wishers to the work, begging it might be shown to Dr. Johnson. This was accordingly done; and in place of the simple mention of him which I had made, he dictated to Mr. Hoole the sentence as it now stands.

"Dr. Johnson told me in 1772, that, about twenty years before that time, he himself had a design to translate the Lusiad, of the merit of which he spoke highly, but had been prevented by a number of other engagements."

Mr. Mickle reminds me in this letter of a conversation at dinner one day at Mr. Hoole's with Dr. Johnson, when Mr. Nicol, the king's bookseller, and I, attempted to controvert the maxim, "Better that ten guilty should escape, than one innocent person suffer," and were answered by Dr. Johnson with great power of reasoning and eloquence. I am very sorry that I have no record of that day: but I well recollect my illustrious friend's having ably shown, that unless civil institutions ensure protection to the innocent, all the confidence which mankind should have in them would be lost.

I shall here mention what, in strict chronological arrangement, should have appeared in my account of last year; but may more properly be introduced here, the controversy having not been closed till this. The Reverend Mr. Shaw[1], a native of one of the Hebrides, having entertained doubts of the authenticity of the poems ascribed to Ossian, divested himself of national bigotry; and having travelled in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and also in Ireland, in order to furnish himself with materials for a Gaëlick Dictionary, which he afterwards compiled, was so fully satisfied that Dr. Johnson was in the right upon the question, that he candidly published a pamphlet, stating his conviction, and the proofs and reasons on which it was founded. A person at Edinburgh, of the name of Clark, answered this pamphlet with much zeal, and much abuse of its authour. Johnson took Mr. Shaw under his protection, and gave him his assistance in writing a reply, which has been admired by the best judges, and by many been considered as conclusive. A few paragraphs, which sufficiently mark their great authour, shall be selected.

"My assertions are, for the most part,

[1] [See *ante*, p. 315.—ED.]

purely negative: I deny the existence of Fingal, because in a long and curious peregrination through the Gaëlick regions I have never been able to find it. What I could not see myself, I suspect to be equally invisible to others; and I suspect with the more reason, as among all those who have seen it no man can show it.

"Mr. Clark compares the obstinacy of those who disbelieve the genuineness of Ossian to a blind man, who should dispute the reality of colours, and deny that the British troops are clothed in red. The blind man's doubt would be rational, if he did not know by experience that others have a power which he himself wants: but what perspicacity has Mr. Clark which Nature has withheld from me or the rest of mankind?

"The true state of the parallel must be this:—Suppose a man, with eyes like his neighbours, was told by a boasting corporal, that the troops, indeed, wore red clothes for their ordinary dress, but that every soldier had likewise a suit of black velvet, which he puts on when the king reviews them. This he thinks strange, and desires to see the fine clothes, but finds nobody in forty thousand men that can produce either coat or waistcoat. One, indeed, has left them in his chest at Port Mahon; another has always heard that he ought to have velvet clothes somewhere; and a third has heard somebody say that soldiers ought to wear velvet. Can the inquirer be blamed if he goes away believing that a soldier's red coat is all that he has?

"But the most obdurate incredulity may be shamed or silenced by facts. To overpower contradictions, let the soldier show his velvet coat, and the Fingalist the original of Ossian.

"The difference between us and the blind man is this: the blind man is unconvinced, because he cannot see; and we because, though we can see, we find nothing that can be shown."

Notwithstanding the complication of disorders under which Johnson now laboured, he did not resign himself to despondency and discontent, but with wisdom and spirit endeavoured to console and amuse his mind with as many innocent enjoyments as he could procure. Sir John Hawkins has mentioned the cordiality with which he insisted that such of the members of the old club in Ivy-lane as survived should meet again and dine together, which they did twice at a tavern, and once at his house.

["DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOHN HAWKINS.

"Bolt-court, 22d Nov. 1783.

Hawk. p. 561. "DEAR SIR,—As Mr. Ryland was talking with me of old friends and past times, we warmed ourselves into a wish, that all who remained of the Club should meet and dine at the house which once was Horseman's, in Ivy-lane. I have undertaken to solicit you, and therefore desire you to tell me on what day next week you can conveniently meet your old friends. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The intended meeting was prevented by a circumstance, which the following note will explain:

"3d Dec. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—In perambulating Ivy-lane, Mr. Ryland found neither our landlord Horseman nor his successor. The old house is shut up, and he liked not the appearance of any near it: he therefore bespoke our dinner at the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard, where, at half an hour after three, your company will be desired to-day by those who remain of our former society. Your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"With this invitation," says Sir John Hawkins, "I cheerfully complied, and met, at the time and place appointed, all who could be mustered of our society, namely, Johnson, Mr. Ryland, and Mr. Payne of the bank. When we were collected, the thought that we were so few occasioned some melancholy reflections, and I could not but compare our meeting, at such an advanced period of life as it was to us all, to that of the four old men in the 'Senile Colloquium' of Erasmus. We dined, and in the evening regaled with coffee. At ten we broke up, much to the regret of Johnson, who proposed staying; but finding us inclined to separate, he left us, with a sigh that seemed to come from his heart, lamenting that he was retiring to solitude and cheerless meditation. Hawk. p. 562.

"Johnson had proposed a meeting like this once a month, and we had one more; but the time approaching for a third, he began to feel a return of some of his complaints, and signified a wish that we would dine with him at his own house; and accordingly we met there, and were very cheerfully entertained by him."]

[Of this meeting he gave the following account to Mrs. Thrale:

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 13th December, 1783.

"I dined about a fortnight ago with three old friends. We had not met together for thirty years, and one of us thought the other grown very old. In the thirty years two of our set have died. Our meeting may be supposed to be somewhat tender."] Letters, vol. ii. p. 339.

In order to ensure himself society in the evening for three days in the week, he in-

stituted a club at the Essex Head, in Essex-street, then kept by Samuel Greaves, an old servant of Mr. Thrale's.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"4th December, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—It is inconvenient to me to come out; I should else have waited on you with an account of a little evening club which we are establishing in Essex-street in the Strand, and of which you are desired to be one. It will be held at the Essex Head, now kept by an old servant of Thrale's. The company is numerous, and, as you will see by the list, miscellaneous. The terms are lax, and the expenses light. Mr. Barry was adopted by Dr. Brocklesby, who joined with me in forming the plan. We meet thrice a week, and he who misses forfeits two-pence.

"If you are willing to become a member, draw a line under your name. Return the list. We meet for the first time on Monday at eight. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

It did not suit[1] Sir Joshua to be one of this club. But when I mention only Mr. Daines Barrington, Dr. Brocklesby, Mr. Murphy, Mr. John Nichols, Mr. Cooke[2], Mr. Joddrel, Mr. Paradise, Dr. Horseley, Mr. Windham[3], I shall sufficiently obviate the misrepresentation of it by Sir John Hawkins, as if it had been a low alehouse association[4], by which Johnson was degraded. Johnson himself, like his namesake Old Ben, composed the rules of his Club.

"RULES.

"To day deep thoughts with me resolve to drench
In mirth, which after no repenting draws.
MILTON.

"The club shall consist of four and twenty.

"The meetings shall be on the Monday, Thursday, and Saturday of every week; but in the week before Easter there shall be no meeting.

"Every member is at liberty to introduce a friend once a week, but not oftener.

"Two members shall oblige themselves to attend in their turn every night from eight to ten, or to procure two to attend in their room.

"Every member present at the club shall spend at least sixpence; and every member who stays away shall forfeit threepence.

"The master of the house shall keep an account of the absent members; and deliver to the president of the night a list of the forfeits incurred.

"When any member returns after absence, he shall immediately lay down his forfeits; which if he omits to do, the president shall require.

"There shall be no general reckoning, but every man shall adjust his own expenses.

"The night of indispensable attendance will come to every member once a month. Whoever shall for three months together omit to attend himself, or by substitution, nor shall make any apology in the fourth month, shall be considered as having abdicated the club.

"When a vacancy is to be filled, the name of the candidate, and of the member recommending him, shall stand in the club room three nights. On the fourth he may be chosen by ballot; six members at least being present, and two-thirds of the ballot being in his favour; or the majority, should the numbers not be divisible by three.

"The master of the house shall give notice, six days before, to each of those members whose turn of necessary attendance is come.

"The notice may be in these words:—'Sir, On ——— the ——— of ———, will be your turn of presiding at the Essex Head. Your company is therefore earnestly requested.

"One penny shall be left by each member for the waiter."

In the end of this year he was seized with a spasmodic asthma of such violence, that he was confined to the house in great pain, being sometimes obliged to sit all night in his chair, a recumbent posture being so hurtful to his respiration, that he could not endure lying in bed; and there came upon him at

[1] [Johnson himself, by the mention of *Barry* the painter, seems to have anticipated some reluctance on the part of Sir Joshua. Indeed, the violence of Barry's temper, and the absurdity of his conduct, rendered him no very agreeable companion; but towards Sir Joshua his behaviour had been particularly offensive.—ED.]

[2] [A biographical notice of Mr. Cooke, who died April 3, 1824, will be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for that month; and some account of Mr. Joddrel is given in Nichols's *Lit. Anec.* vol. viii.—ED.]

[3] I was in Scotland when this club was founded, and during all the winter. Johnson, however, declared I should be a member, and invented a word upon the occasion: "Boswell," said he, "is a very *clubable* man." When I came to town I was proposed by Mr. Barrington, and chosen. I believe there are few societies where there is better conversation or more decorum. Several of us resolved to continue it after our great founder was removed by death. Other members were added; and now, about eight years since that loss, we go on happily. Johnson's definition of a club, in this sense, in his Dictionary, is "An assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions."—BOSWELL.

[4] [Miss Hawkins candidly says, "Boswell was well justified in his resentment of my father's designation of this as *a sixpenny club at an alehouse*. I am sorry my father permitted himself to be so pettish on the subject. Honestly speaking, I dare say he did not like being passed over."—*Mem.* vol. ii. p. 104.—ED.]

the same time that oppressive and fatal disease, a dropsy. It was a very severe winter, which probably aggravated his complaints; and the solitude in which Mr. Levett and Mrs. Williams had left him rendered his life very gloomy. Mrs. Desmoulins, who still lived, was herself so very ill, that she could contribute very little to his relief. He, however, had none of that unsocial shyness which we commonly see in people afflicted with sickness. He did not hide his head from the world, in solitary abstraction; he did not deny himself to the visits of his friends and acquaintances; but at all times, when he was not overcome by sleep, was as ready for conversation as in his best days.

And now I am arrived at the last year of the life of SAMUEL JOHNSON; a year in which, although passed in severe indisposition, he nevertheless gave many evidences of the continuance of those wondrous powers of mind which raised him so high in the intellectual world. His conversation and his letters of this year were in no respect inferiour to those of former years.

The following is a remarkable proof of his being alive to the most minute curiosities of literature.

"TO MR. DILLY, BOOKSELLER, IN THE POULTRY.

"6th January, 1784.

"SIR,—There is in the world a set of books which used to be sold by the booksellers on the bridge, and which I must entreat you to procure me. They are called *Burton's Books*[1]: the title of one is 'Admirable Curiosities, Rarities, and Wonders in England.' I believe there are about five or six of them, they seem very proper to allure backward readers; be so kind as to get them for me, and send me them with the best printed edition of 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted.' I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. PERKINS.

"21st January, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I was very sorry not to see you, when you were so kind as to call on me, but to disappoint friends, and if they are not very good-natured, to disoblige them, is one of the evils of sickness. If you will please to let me know which of the afternoons in this week I shall be favoured with another visit by you and Mrs. Perkins, and the young people, I will take all the measures that I can to be pretty well at that time. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

His attention to the Essex-Head Club appears from the following letter to Mr. Alderman Clark, a gentleman for whom he deservedly entertained a great regard[2].

"TO RICHARD CLARK, ESQ.

"27th January, 1784

"DEAR SIR,—You will receive a requisition, according to the rules of the club, to be at the house as president of the night. This turn comes once a month, and the member is obliged to attend, or send another in his place. You were inrolled in the club by my invitation, and I ought to introduce you; but as I am hindered by sickness, Mr. Hoole will very properly supply my place as in-

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1 These books are much more numerous than Johnson supposed. The following list comprises several of them; but probably is incomplete:

1. Historical Rarities in London and Westminster 1681
2. Wars in England, Scotland, and Ireland 1681
3. Wonderful Prodigies of Judgment and Mercy 1681
4. Strange and prodigious religious Customs and Manners of sundry Nations 1683
5. English Empire in America . 1685
6. Surprising Miracles of Nature and Art [Admirable Curiosities of Nature, &c. 1681.—Probably the same book with a different title.] 1685
7. History of Scotland . . . 1685
8. History of Ireland . . . 1685
9. Two Journies to Jerusalem . 1685
10. Nine Worthies of the World . 1687
11. Winter's Evenings' Entertainments 1687
12. The English Hero, or the life of Sir Francis Drake . . . 1687
13. Memorable Accidents and unheard-of Transactions . . . 1693
14. History of the House of Orange . 1693
15. Burton's Acts of the Martyrs (or, of Martyrs in Flames) . . 1695
16. Curiosities of England . . 1697
17. History of Oliver Cromwell . 1698
18. Unparalleled Varieties . . 1699
19. Unfortunate Court Favourites of England 1706
20. History of the Lives of English Divines 1709
21. Ingenious Riddles . . . .
22. Unhappy Princesses, or the History of Anne Boleyn and Lady Jane Gray 1710
23. Æsop's Fables, in prose and verse 1712
24. History of Virginia . . . 1722
25. English Acquisitions in Guinea and the East Indies . . . 1726
26. Female Excellency, or the Ladies' Glory 1728
27. General History of Earthquakes . 1736
28. The English Heroine, or the Life and Adventures of Mrs. Christian Davies, commonly called Mother Ross . . . . .
29. Youth's Divine Pastime . .

MALONE.

2 [As this sheet is passing through the press, the Editor learns the death of his venerable friend, Mr. Clark, who had kindly contributed some information to the foregoing volumes. He died at Chertsey on the 16th January, 1831, æt. 93.—ED.]

troductor, or yours as president. I hope in milder weather to be a very constant attendant. I am, sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"You ought to be informed that the forfeits began with the year, and that every night of non-attendance incurs the mulct of threepence, that is, ninepence a-week."

On the 8th of January I wrote to him, anxiously inquiring as to his health, and enclosing my "Letter to the People of Scotland on the Present State of the Nation." "I trust," said I, "that you will be liberal enough to make allowance for my differing from you on two points, [the Middlesex election and the American war,] when my general principles of government are according to your own heart, and when, at a crisis of doubtful event, I stand forth with honest zeal as an ancient and faithful Briton. My reason for introducing those two points was, that as my opinions with regard to them had been declared at the periods when they were least favourable, I might have the credit of a man who is not a worshipper of ministerial power."

["MR. BOSWELL TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"Edinburgh, 6th February, 1784.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I long exceedReyn. MSS. ingly to hear from you. Sir William Forbes brought me good accounts of you, and Mr. Temple sent me very pleasing intelligence concerning the fair *Palmeria*[1]. But a line or two from yourself is the next thing to seeing you.

"My anxiety about Dr. Johnson is truly great. I had a letter from him within these six weeks, written with his usual acuteness and vigour of mind. But he complained sadly of the state of his health; and I have been informed since that he is worse. I intend to be in London next month, chiefly to attend upon him with respectful affection. But, in the mean time, it will be a great favour done me, if you, who know him so well, will be kind enough to let me know particularly how he is.

"I hope Mr. Dilly conveyed to you my Letter on the State of the Nation, *from the Authour*. I know your political principles, and indeed your settled system of thinking upon civil society and subordination, to be according to my own heart, and therefore I doubt not you will approve of my honest zeal. But what monstrous effects of party do we now see! I am really vexed at the conduct of some of our friends[2].

"Amidst the conflict our friend of Port Elliot is with much propriety created a peer But why, O why did he not obtain the title of Baron *Mahogany*[3]? Genealogists and heralds would have had curious work of it to explain and illustrate that title. I ever am, with sincere regard, my dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"11th February, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I hear of many inquiries which your kindness has disposed you to make after me. I have long intended you a long letter, which perhaps the imagination of its length hindered me from beginning. I will, therefore, content myself with a shorter.

"Having promoted the institution of a new club in the neighbourhood, at the house of an old servant of Thrale's, I went thither to meet the company, and was seized with a spasmodick asthma, so violent, that with difficulty I got to my own house, in which I have been confined eight or nine weeks, and from which I know not when I shall be able to go even to church. The asthma, however, is not the worst. A dropsy gains ground upon me; my legs and thighs are very much swollen with water, which I should be content if I could keep there; but I am afraid it will soon be higher. My nights are very sleepless and very tedious. And yet I am extremely afraid of dying.

"My physicians try to make me hope that much of my malady is the effect of cold, and that some degree at least of recovery is to be expected from vernal breezes and summer suns. If my life is prolonged to autumn, I should be glad to try a warmer climate; though how to travel with a diseased body, without a companion to conduct me, and with very little money, I do not well see. Ramsay has recovered his limbs in Italy; and Fielding was sent to Lisbon, where, indeed, he died; but he was, I believe, past hope when he went. Think for me what I can do.

"I received your pamphlet, and when I write again may perhaps tell you some opinion about it; but you will forgive a man struggling with disease his neglect of disputes, politicks, and pamphlets. Let me have your prayers. My compliments to your lady, and young ones. Ask your physicians about my case: and desire Sir Alexander Dick to write me his opinion. I am, dear sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["A few days after the remnant of the Ivy-lane Club had dined with him," says Sir John Hawkins, "he sent for me, and informed me, that he hav-

Hawk. 53-6.

[1] [No doubt Miss Palmer, afterwards Lady Thomond, Sir Joshua's niece.—ED.]

[2] [Messrs. Fox and Burke.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 285.—ED.]

discovered in himself the symptoms of a dropsy, which, indeed, his very much increased bulk, and the swollen appearance of his legs, seemed to indicate. He told me, that he was desirous of making a will, and requested me to be one of his executors: upon my consenting, he gave me to understand, that he meant to make a provision for his servant, Frank, of about 70*l.* a year for life, and concerted with me a plan for investing a sum sufficient for the purpose: at the same time he stated his circumstances, and the amount of what he had to dispose of."

"In a visit which I made him in a few days, in consequence of a very pressing request to see me, I found him labouring under great dejection of mind. He bade me draw near him, and said, he wanted to enter into a serious conversation with me; and, upon my expressing a willingness to join in it, he, with a look that cut me to the heart, told me, that he had the prospect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour. I could not but be astonished at such a declaration, and advised him, as I had done once before, to reflect on the course of his life, and the services he had rendered to the cause of religion and virtue, as well by his example as his writings; to which he answered, that he had written as a philosopher, but had not lived like one. In the estimation of his offences, he reasoned thus: 'Every man knows his own sins, and also what grace he has resisted. But, to those of others, and the circumstances under which they were committed, he is a stranger: he is, therefore, to look on himself as the greatest sinner that he knows of.' At the conclusion of this argument, which he strongly enforced, he uttered this passionate exclamation,—"Shall I, who have been a teacher of others, myself be a castaway?"

"Much to the same purpose passed between us in this and other conversations that I had with him, in all which I could not but wonder, as much at the freedom with which he opened his mind, and the compunction he seemed to feel for the errors of his past life, as I did at his making choice of me for his confessor, knowing full well how meanly qualified I was for such an office."

"It was on a Thursday[1] that I had this conversation with him; and here let not the supercilious lip of scorn protrude itself, while I relate that he declared his intention to devote the whole of the next day to fasting, humiliation, and such other devotional exercises as became a man in his situation. On the Saturday following, I made him visit, and, upon entering his room, observe in his countenance such a serenity, as indicated that some remarkable crisis of his disorder had produced a change in his feelings. He told me, that, pursuant to his resolution, he had spent the preceding day in an abstraction from all worldly concerns; that, to prevent interruption, he had, in the morning, ordered Frank not to admit any one to him, and, the better to enforce the charge, had added these awful words, 'For your master is preparing himself to die.' He then mentioned to me, that, in the course of this exercise, he found himself relieved from that disorder which had been growing on him, and was become very oppressing, the dropsy, by a gradual evacuation of water to the amount of twenty pints, a like instance whereof he had never before experienced; and asked me what I thought of it."

"I was well aware of the lengths that superstition and enthusiasm will lead men, and how ready some are to attribute favourable events to supernatural causes, and said, that it might savour of presumption to say that, in this instance, God had wrought a miracle; yet, as divines recognise certain dispensations of his providence, recorded in the Scripture by the denomination of returns of prayer, and his omnipotence is now the same as ever, I thought it would be little less than criminal to ascribe his late relief to causes merely natural, and that the safer opinion was, that he had not in vain humbled himself before his Maker. He seemed to acquiesce in all that I said on this important subject, and, several times, while I was discoursing with him, cried out, 'It is wonderful, very wonderful[2]!'

"His zeal for religion, as manifested in his writings and conversation, and the accounts extant that attest his piety, have induced the enemies to his memory to tax him with superstition. To that charge I oppose his behaviour on this occasion, and leave it to the judgment of sober and rational persons, whether such an unexpected event as that above mentioned would not have prompted a really superstitious man to some more passionate exclamation than that it was 'wonderful.'"]

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"23d February, 1784.

"MY DEAREST LOVE,—I have been extremely ill of an asthma and dropsy, but received by the mercy of God sudden and

[1] [It appears from Johnson's own letters that the event itself took place on Thursday, 19th February.—ED.]

[2] [I have given Sir John Hawkins's account of this extraordinary circumstance, although Mr. Boswell relates it also (*post*, *sub* 5th May), both because Hawkins tells it rather more distinctly, and that it is desirable to produce all possible confirmation of such a fact.—ED.]

unexpected relief last Thursday, by the discharge of twenty pints of water. Whether I shall continue free, or shall fill again, cannot be told. Pray for me.

"Death, my dear, is very dreadful; let us think nothing worth our care but how to prepare for it: what we know amiss in ourselves let us make haste to amend, and put our trust in the mercy of God and the intercession of our Saviour. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 27th Feb. 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have just advanced so far towards recovery as to read a pamphlet; and you may reasonably suppose that the first pamphlet which I read was yours. I am very much of your opinion, and, like you, feel great indignation at the indecency with which the king is every day treated. Your paper contains very considerable knowledge of history and of the constitution, very properly produced and applied. It will certainly raise your character [1], though perhaps it may not make you a minister of state.

* * * * * *

"I desire you to see Mrs. Stewart once again, and tell her, that in the letter-case was a letter relating to me, for which I will give her, if she is willing to give it me, another guinea. The letter is of consequence only to me [2]. I am, dear sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In consequence of Johnson's request that I should ask our physicians about his case, and desire Sir Alexander Dick to send his opinion, I transmitted him a letter from that very amiable baronet, then in his eighty-first year, with his faculties as entire as ever, and mentioned his expressions to me in the note accompanying it,—"With my most affectionate wishes for Dr. Johnson's recovery, in which his friends, his country, and all mankind have so deep a stake;" and at the same time a full opinion upon his case by Dr. Gillespie, who, like Dr. Cullen, had the advantage of having passed through the gradations of surgery and pharmacy, and by study and practice had attained to such skill, that my father settled on him two hundred pounds a year for five years, and fifty pounds a year during his life, as an *honorarium* to secure his particular attendance. The opinion was conveyed in a letter to me, beginning, "I am sincerely sorry for the bad state of health your very learned and illustrious friend, Dr. Johnson, labours under at present."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 2d March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Presently after I had sent away my last letter, I received your kind medical packet. I am very much obliged both to you and to your physicians for your kind attention to my disease. Dr. Gillespie has sent me an excellent *consilium medicum*, all solid practical experimental knowledge. I am at present, in the opinion of my physicians (Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brocklesby), as well as my own, going on very hopefully. I have just begun to take vinegar of squills. The powder hurt my stomach so much that it could not be continued.

"Return Sir Alexander Dick my sincere thanks for his kind letter; and bring with you the rhubarb [3] which he so tenderly offers me.

"I hope dear Mrs. Boswell is now quite well, and that no evil, either real or imaginary, now disturbs you. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I also applied to three of the eminent physicians who had chairs in our celebrated school of medicine at Edinburgh, Doctors Cullen, Hope, and Monro, to each of whom I sent the following letter:

"7th March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Dr. Johnson has been very ill for some time; and in a letter of anxious

[1] ["Letter to the People of Scotland on the present State of the Nation."] I sent it to Mr. Pitt, with a letter, in which I thus expressed myself: "My principles may appear to you too monarchical; but I know and am persuaded they are not inconsistent with the true principles of liberty. Be this as it may, you, sir, are now the prime minister, called by the sovereign to maintain the rights of the crown, as well as those of the people, against a violent faction. As such, you are entitled to the warmest support of every good subject in every department." He answered, "I am extremely obliged to you for the sentiments you do me the honour to express, and have observed with great pleasure the *zealous and able support* given to the cause of the publick in the work you were so good to transmit to me."—BOSWELL. [One cannot but smile at Mr. Boswell's apology to Mr. Pitt for appearing *too monarchical*. Mr. Pitt, it will be recollected, had (after a short parliamentary life, in which he had shown a disposition to whig principles) lately become prime minister, on the dismissal of the celebrated *Coalition* administration.—ED.]

[2] [The letter was probably lost. Mr. Boswell could else have hardly failed to inform us what it related to. It is clear that Johnson set a good deal of value upon it, for he mentions it again yet more earnestly in another letter, 18th March, 1784.—ED.]

[3] From his garden at Prestonfield, where he cultivated that plant with such success that he was presented with a gold medal by the Society of London for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce.—BOSWELL.

apprehension he writes to me, 'Ask your physicians about my case.'

"This, you see, is not authority for a regular consultation: but I have no doubt of your readiness to give your advice to a man so eminent, and who, in his Life of Garth, has paid your profession a just and elegant compliment: 'I believe every man has found in physicians great liberality and dignity of sentiment, very prompt effusions of beneficence, and willingness to exert a lucrative art where there is no hope of lucre.'

"Dr. Johnson is aged seventy-four. Last summer he had a stroke of the palsy, from which he recovered almost entirely. He had, before that, been troubled with a catarrhous cough. This winter he was seized with a spasmodick asthma, by which he has been confined to his house about three months. Dr. Brocklesby writes to me, that upon the least admission of cold, there is such a constriction upon his breast, that he cannot lie down in his bed, but is obliged to sit up all night, and gets rest, and sometimes sleep, only by means of laudanum and syrup of poppies; and that there are œdematous tumours in his legs and thighs. Dr. Brocklesby trusts a good deal to the return of mild weather. Dr. Johnson says that a dropsy gains ground upon him; and he seems to think that a warmer climate would do him good. I understand he is now rather better, and is using vinegar of squills. I am, with great esteem, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

All of them paid the most polite attention to my letter and its venerable object. Dr. Cullen's words concerning him were, "It would give me the greatest pleasure to be of any service to a man whom the publick properly esteem, and whom I esteem and respect as much as I do Dr. Johnson." Dr. Hope's, "Few people have a better claim on me than your friend, as hardly a day passes that I do not ask his opinion about this or that word." Dr. Monro's, "I most sincerely join you in sympathizing with that very worthy and ingenious character, from whom his country has derived much instruction and entertainment."

Dr. Hope corresponded with his friend Dr. Brocklesby. Doctors Cullen and Monro wrote their opinions and prescriptions to me, which I afterwards carried with me to London, and, so far as they were encouraging, communicated to Johnson. The liberality on one hand, and grateful sense of it on the other, I have great satisfaction in recording.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 10th March, 1784.

Pearson MSS. "MY DEAREST LOVE,—I will not suppose that it is for want of kindness that you did not answer my last letter and I therefore write again to tell you that I have, by God's great mercy, still continued to grow better. My asthma is seldom troublesome, and my dropsy has ran itself almost away, in a manner which my physician says is very uncommon.

"I have been confined from the 14th of December, and shall not soon venture abroad; but I have this day dressed myself as I was before my sickness.

"If it be inconvenient to you to write, desire Mr. Pearson to let me know how you do, and how you have passed this long winter. I am now not without hopes that we shall once more see one another.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb and Miss Adey, and to all my friends, particularly to Mr. Pearson. I am, my dear, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. GASTRELL AND MISS ASTON.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London, 11th March, 1784.

"DEAR LADIES,—The kind and speedy answer with which you favoured me to my last letter encourages me to hope that you will be glad to hear again that my recovery advances. My disorders are an asthma and dropsy. The asthma gives me no great trouble when I am not in motion, and the water of the dropsy has passed away in so happy a manner, by the goodness of God, as Dr. Heberden declares himself not to have known more than four times in all his practice. I have been confined to the house from December the 14th, and shall not venture out till the weather is settled; but I have this day dressed myself as before I became ill. Join with me in returning thanks, and pray for me that the time now granted me may not be ill spent. Pemb MS.

"Let me now, dear ladies, have some account of you. Tell me how you have endured this long and sharp winter, and give me hopes that we may all meet again with kindness and cheerfulness. I am, dear ladies, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 18th March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I am too much pleased with the attention which you and your dear lady[1] show to my welfare, not to be diligent in letting you know the progress which I make towards health. The dropsy, by God's blessing, has now run almost totally away by natural evacuation: and the asthma, if not irritated by cold, gives me

[1] Who had written him a very kind letter. BOSWELL.

little trouble. While I am writing this I have not any sensation of debility or disease. But I do not yet venture out, having been confined to the house from the 13th of December, now a quarter of a year.

"When it will be fit for me to travel as far as Auchinleck I am not able to guess; but such a letter as Mrs. Boswell's might draw any man not wholly motionless a great way. Pray tell the dear lady how much her civility and kindness have touched and gratified me.

"Our parliamentary tumults have now begun to subside, and the king's authority is in some measure re-established. Mr. Pitt will have great power[1]; but you must remember that what he has to give must, at least for some time, be given to those who gave, and those who preserve, his power. A new minister can sacrifice little to esteem or friendship: he must, till he is settled, think only of extending his interest.

* * * * * *

"If you come hither through Edinburgh, send for Mrs. Stewart, and give from me another guinea for the letter in the old case, to which I shall not be satisfied with my claim till she gives it me.

"Please to bring with you Baxter's Anacreon; and if you procure heads of Hector Boece, the historian, and Arthur Johnston[2], the poet, I will put them in my room; or any other of the fathers of Scottish literature.

"I wish you an easy and happy journey, and hope I need not tell you that you will be welcome to, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 20th March, 1784.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 354. "MADAM,—Your last letter had something of tenderness. The accounts which you have had of my danger and distress were I suppose not aggravated. I have been confined ten weeks with an asthma and dropsy. But I am now better. God has in his mercy granted me a reprieve; for how much time his mercy must determine.

"On the 19th of last month I evacuated twenty pints of water, and I think I reckon exactly. From that time the tumour has subsided, and I now begin to move with some freedom. You will easily believe that I am still at a great distance from health; but I am, as my chirurgeon expressed it, amazingly better. Heberden seems to have great hopes.

"Write to me no more about *dying with a grace*. When you feel what I have felt in approaching eternity—in fear of soon hearing the sentence of which there is no revocation—you will know the folly: my wish is that you may know it sooner. The distance between the grave and the remotest part of human longevity is but a very little; and of that little no path is certain. You know all this, and I thought that I knew it too; but I know it now with a new conviction. May that new conviction not be vain!

"I am now cheerful. I hope this approach to recovery is a token of the Divine mercy. My friends continue their kindness. I give a dinner to-morrow. I am, madam, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

I wrote to him, March 28, from York, informing him that I had a high gratification in the triumph of monarchical principles over aristocratical influence, in that great county, in an address to the king; that I was thus far on my way to him, but that news of the dissolution of parliament having arrived, I was to hasten back to my own county, where I had carried an address to his majesty by a great majority, and had some intention of being a candidate to represent the county in parliament.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 30th March, 1784

"DEAR SIR,—You could do nothing so proper as to hasten back when you found the parliament dissolved. With the influence which your address must have gained you, it may reasonably be expected that your presence will be of importance, and your activity of effect.

"Your solicitude for me gives me that pleasure which every man feels from the kindness of such a friend; and it is with delight I relieve it by telling that Dr. Brocklesby's account is true, and that I am, by the blessing of God, wonderfully relieved.

"You are entering upon a transaction which requires much prudence. You must endeavour to oppose without exasperating; to practise temporary hostility, without producing enemies for life. This is, perhaps, hard to be done; yet it has been done by many, and seems most likely to be effected by opposing merely upon general principles, without descending to personal or particular censures or objections. One thing I must enjoin you, which is seldom observed in the conduct of elections; I must entreat you to be scrupulous in the use of strong liquors. One night's drunkenness may defeat the la-

1 [Mr. Boswell does not give us *his* letter, to which this is an answer; but it is clear that he expressed some too sanguine hopes of preferment from Mr. Pitt, whose favour, as we have just seen, he had endeavoured to propitiate. See *ante*, p. 253, *n.*—ED.]

2 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 353.—ED.]

bours of forty days well employed. Be firm, but not clamorous; be active, but not malicious; and you may form such an interest, as may not only exalt yourself, but dignify your family.

"We are, as you may suppose, all busy here. Mr. Fox resolutely stands for Westminster, and his friends say will carry the election[1]. However that be, he will certainly have a seat. Mr. Hoole has just told me, that the city leans towards the king.

"Let me hear, from time to time, how you are employed, and what progress you make.

"Make dear Mrs. Boswell, and all the young Boswells, the sincere compliments of, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mr. Langton he wrote with that cordiality which was suitable to the long friendship which had subsisted between him and that gentleman.

"DR. JOHNSON TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"27th March, 1784.

"Since you left me I have continued, in my own opinion, and in Dr. Brocklesby's, to grow better, with respect to all my formidable and dangerous distempers; though, to a body battered and shaken as mine has lately been, it is to be feared that weak attacks may be sometimes mischievous. I have, indeed, by standing carelessly at an open window, got a very troublesome cough, which it has been necessary to appease by opium, in larger quantities than I like to take, and I have not found it give way so readily as I expected: its obstinacy, however, seems at last disposed to submit to the remedy, and I know not whether I should then have a right to complain of any morbid sensation. My asthma is, I am afraid, constitutional and incurable; but it is only occasional, and, unless it be excited by labour or by cold, gives me no molestation, nor does it lay very close siege to life; for Sir John Floyer, whom the physickal race consider as authour of one of the best books upon it, panted on to ninety, as was supposed. And why were we content with supposing a fact so interesting of a man so conspicuous? Because he corrupted, at perhaps seventy or eighty, the register, that he might pass for younger than he was. He was not much less than eighty, when to a man of rank, who modestly asked his age, he answered, 'Go look;' though he was in general a man of civility and elegance.

"The ladies, I find, are at your house all well, except Miss Langton, who will probably soon recover her health by light suppers. Let her eat at dinner as she will, but not take a full stomach to bed. Pay my sincere respects to dear Miss Langton in Lincolnshire; let her know that I mean not to break our league of friendship, and that I have a set of Lives for her, when I have the means of sending it."

"8th April.

"I am still disturbed by my cough; but what thanks have I not to pay, when my cough is the most painful sensation that I feel? and from that I expect hardly to be released, while winter continues to gripe us with so much pertinacity. The year has now advanced eighteen days beyond the equinox, and still there is very little remission of the cold. When warm weather comes, which surely must come at last, I hope it will help both me and your young lady.

"The man so busy about addresses is neither more nor less than our own Boswell, who had come as far as York towards London, but turned back on the dissolution, and is said now to stand for some place. Whether to wish him success his best friends hesitate.

"Let me have your prayers for the completion of my recovery. I am now better than I ever expected to have been. May God add to his mercies the grace that may enable me to use them according to his will. My compliments to all."

"13th April.

"I had this evening a note from Lord Portmore, desiring that I would give you an account of my health. You might have had it with less circumduction. I am, by God's blessing, I believe, free from all morbid sensations, except a cough, which is only troublesome. But I am still weak, and can have no great hope of strength till the weather shall be softer. The summer, if it be kindly, will, I hope, enable me to support the winter. God, who has so wonderfully restored me, can preserve me in all seasons.

"Let me inquire in my turn after the state of your family, great and little. I hope Lady Rothes and Miss Langton are both well. That is a good basis of content. Then how goes George on with his studies? How does Miss Mary? And how does my own Jenny? I think I owe Jenny a letter, which I will take care to pay. In the mean time tell her that I acknowledge the debt.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to the ladies. If Mrs. Langton comes to London, she will favour me with a visit, for I am not well enough to go out."

To Lord Portmore's note, mentioned in

[1] [Mr. Fox was returned for Westminster, after a sharp election and a tedious scrutiny.—Ed.]

the foregoing extract, Johnson returned this answer:

"TO THE RIGHT HON. EARL OF PORTMORE.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 13th April, 1784.

"Dr. Johnson acknowledges with great respect the honour of Lord Portmore's notice. He is better than he was; and will, as his lordship directs, write to Mr. Langton."

"TO OZIAS HUMPHRY, ESQ[1].

"5th April, 1784.

"SIR,—Mr. Hoole has told me with what benevolence you listened to a request which I was almost afraid to make, of leave to a young painter[2] to attend you from time to time in your painting-room, to see your operations, and receive your instructions.

"The young man has perhaps good parts, but has been without a regular education. He is my godson, and therefore I interest myself in his progress and success, and shall think myself much favoured if I receive from you a permission to send him.

"My health is, by God's blessing, much restored, but I am not yet allowed by my physicians to go abroad; nor, indeed, do I think myself yet able to endure the weather. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"10th April, 1784.

"SIR,—The bearer is my godson, whom I take the liberty of recommending to your kindness; which I hope he will deserve by his respect to your excellence, and his gratitude for your favours. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"12th April, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am not yet able to wait on you, but I can do your business commodiously enough. You must send me the copy to show the printer. If you will come to tea this afternoon, we will talk together about it. Pray send me word whether you will come. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."] Reyn. MSS.

"TO OZIAS HUMPHRY, ESQ.

"31st May, 1784.

"SIR,—I am very much obliged by your civilities to my godson, but must beg of you to add to them the favour of permitting him to see you paint, that he may know how a picture is begun, advanced, and completed.

"If he may attend you in a few of your operations, I hope he will show that the benefit has been properly conferred, both by his proficiency and his gratitude. At least I shall consider you as enlarging your kindness to, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND DR. TAYLOR, ASHBOURNE.

"London, Easter-Monday, 12th April, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—What can be the reason that I hear nothing from you? I hope nothing disables you from writing. What I have seen, and what I have felt, gives me reason to fear every thing. Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing, that after all my losses, I have yet a friend left.

"I want every comfort. My life is very solitary and very cheerless. Though it has pleased God wonderfully to deliver me from the dropsy, I am yet very weak, and have not passed the door since the 13th of December. I hope for some help from warm weather, which will surely come in time.

"I could not have the consent of the physicians to go to church yesterday; I therefore received the holy sacrament at home, in the room where I communicated with dear Mrs. Williams, a little before her death. O! my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful! I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from God.

"In the meantime, let us be kind to one another. I have no friend now living but you[3] and Mr. Hector, that was the friend of

[1] The eminent painter, representative of the ancient family of Homfrey (now Humphry) in the west of England; who, as appears from their arms which they have invariably used, have been (as I have seen authenticated by the best authority) one of those among the knights and esquires of honour, who are represented by Holinshed as having issued from the tower of London on coursers apparelled for the justes, accompanied by ladies of honour, leading every one a knight, with a chain of gold, passing through the streets of London into Smithfield, on Sunday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, being the first Sunday after Michaelmas, in the fourteenth year of King Richard the Second. This family once enjoyed large possessions, but, like others, have lost them in the progress of ages. Their blood, however, remains to them well ascertained; and they may hope, in the revolution of events, to recover that rank in society for which, in modern times, fortune seems to be an indispensable requisite.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Humphry died in 1810, æt. 68. His "*eminence*" as a painter was a good-natured error of Mr. Boswell's.—ED.]

[2] Son of Mr. Samuel Paterson, eminent for his knowledge of books.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p. 349.—ED.]

[3] This friend of Johnson's youth survived

my youth. Do not neglect, dear sir, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 15th April, 1784.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 361-7. "Yesterday I had the pleasure of giving another dinner to the remainder of the old club. We used to meet weekly about the year 1750, and we were as cheerful as in former times: only I could not make quite so much noise; for since the paralytick affliction, my voice is sometimes weak.

"Metcalf and Crutchley, without knowing each other, are both members of parliament for Horsham in Sussex. Mr. Cator is chosen for Ipswich.

"But a sick man's thoughts soon turn back upon himself. I am still very weak, though my appetite is keen, and my digestion potent; and I gratify myself more at table than ever I did at my own cost before. I have now an inclination to luxury which even your table did not excite; for till now my *talk* was more about the dishes than my *thoughts*. I remember you commended me for seeming pleased with my dinners when you had reduced your table. I am able to tell you with great veracity that I never knew when the reduction began, nor should have known that it was made had not you told me. I now think and consult to-day what I shall eat to-morrow. This disease will likewise, I hope, be cured. For there are other things—how different!—which ought to predominate in the mind of such a man as I: but in this world the body will have its part; and my hope is, that it shall have no more—my hope, but not my confidence; I have only the timidity of a christian to determine, not the wisdom of a stoick to secure me.'

"London, 19th April, 1784.

"I received this morning your magnificent fish, and in the afternoon your apology for not sending it. I have invited the Hooles and Miss Burney to dine upon it to-morrow.

"The club which has lately been instituted is at Sam's; and there was I when I was last out of the house. But the people whom I mentioned in my letter are the remnant of a little club [1] that used to meet in Ivy-lane about three and thirty years ago, out of which we have lost Hawkesworth and Dyer—the rest are yet on this side the grave."

"London, 21st April, 1784.

"I make haste to send you intelligence, which, if I do not flatter myself, you will not receive without some degree of pleasure. After a confinement of one hundred and twenty-nine days, more than the third part of a year, and no inconsiderable part of human life, I this day returned thanks to God in St. Clement's church for my recovery; a recovery, in my seventy-fifth year, from a distemper which few in the vigour of youth are known to surmount; a recovery, of which neither myself, my friends, nor my physicians, had any hope; for though they flattered me with some continuance of life, they never supposed that I could cease to be dropsical. The dropsy, however, is quite vanished; and the asthma so much mitigated, that I walked to-day with a more easy respiration than I have known, I think, for perhaps two years past. I hope the mercy that lightens my days will assist me to use them well.

"The Hooles, Miss Burney, and Mrs. Hall (Wesley's sister), feasted yesterday with me very cheerfully on your noble salmon. Mr. Allen could not come, and I sent him a piece, and a great tail is still left.

"Dr. Brocklesby forbids the club at present, not caring to venture the chillness of the evening; but I purpose to show myself on Saturday at the Academy's feast [2]. I cannot publish my return to the world more effectually; for, as the Frenchman says, *tout le monde s'y trouvera*.

"For this occasion I ordered some clothes, and was told by the tailor, that when he brought me a sick dress, he never expected to make me any thing of any other kind. My recovery is indeed wonderful."

"London, 26th April, 1784

"On Saturday I showed myself again to the living world at the Exhibition: much and splendid was the company, but, like the Doge of Genoa at Paris, I admired nothing but myself. I went up all the stairs to the pictures without stopping to rest or to breathe,

'In all the madness of superfluous health.'

"The Prince of Wales had promised to be there; but when we had waited an hour and a half, sent us word that he could not come.

"Mrs. Davenant [3] called to pay me a guinea, but I gave two for you. Whatever reasons you have for frugality, it is not worth while to save a guinea a year by withdrawing it from a publick charity.

"Mr. Howard called on me a few days ago, and gave me the new edition, much

him somewhat more than three years, having died February 19, 1788.—MALONE.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 75.—ED.]

[2] [The Exhibition dinner of the Royal Academy.—ED.]

[3] [Probably a cousin of Mrs. Thrale's, Hester Lynch Salusbury Cotton, married to Mr. Davenant, who afterwards assumed the name of Corbet, and was created a baronet.—ED.]

enlarged, of his Account of Prisons. He has been to survey the prisons on the continent; and in Spain he tried to penetrate the dungeons of the Inquisition, but his curiosity was very imperfectly gratified. At Madrid, they shut him quite out; at Valladolid, they showed him some public rooms."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 26th April, 1784.

"MY DEAR,—I write to you now, to tell you that I am so far recovered that on the 21st I went to church to return thanks, after a confinement of more than four long months.

"My recovery is such as neither myself nor the physicians at all expected, and is such as that very few examples have been known of the like. Join with me, my dear love, in returning thanks to God.

"Dr. Vyse has been with (me) this evening; he tells me that you likewise have been much disordered, but that you are now better. I hope that we shall some time have a cheerful interview. In the mean time let us pray for one another. I am, madam, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"Bolt-court, 30th April, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—Mr. Allen has looked over the papers[1], and thinks that one hundred copies will come to five pounds. Reyn. MSS.

"Fifty will cost 4*l.* 10*s.*, and five and twenty will cost 4*l.* 5*s.* It seems therefore scarcely worth while to print fewer than a hundred.

"Suppose you printed two hundred and fifty at 6*l.* 10*s.*, and, without any name, tried the sale, which may be secretly done. You would then see the opinion of the publick without hazard, if nobody knows but I. If any body else is in the secret, you shall not have my consent to venture. I am, dear madam, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

What follows is a beautiful specimen of his gentleness and complacency to a young lady, his god-child, one of the daughters of his friend Mr. Langton, then, I think, in her seventh year. He took the trouble to write it in a large round hand, nearly resembling printed characters, that she might have the satisfaction of reading it herself. The original lies before me, but shall be faithfully restored to her; and I dare say will be preserved by her as a jewel, as long as she lives.

[1] [Perhaps Miss Reynolds's Essay on Taste." See *ante*, p. 307. Mr. Boswell was probably mistaken in saying that it had been printed.—ED.]

"TO MISS JANE LANGTON, IN ROCHESTER, KENT.

"May 10, 1784.

"MY DEAREST MISS JENNY,—I am sorry that your pretty letter has been so long without being answered; but, when I am not pretty well, I do not always write plain enough for young ladies. I am glad, my dear, to see that you write so well, and hope that you mind your pen, your book, and your needle, for they are all necessary. Your books will give you knowledge, and make you respected; and your needle will find you useful employment when you do not care to read. When you are a little older, I hope you will be very diligent in learning arithmetick; and, above all, that through your whole life you will carefully say your prayers and read your Bible. I am, my dear, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On Wednesday, May 5, I arrived in London, and next morning had the pleasure to find Dr. Johnson greatly recovered. I but just saw him; for a coach was waiting to carry him to Islington, to the house of his friend the Reverend Mr. Strahan, where he went sometimes for the benefit of good air, which, notwithstanding his having formerly laughed at the general opinion upon the subject, he now acknowledged was conducive to health.

One morning afterwards, when I found him alone, he communicated to me, with solemn earnestness, the very remarkable circumstance [alluded to so often in the preceding letters] which had happened in the course of his illness, when he was much distressed by the dropsy. He had shut himself up, and employed a day in particular exercises of religion, fasting, humiliation, and prayer. On a sudden he obtained extraordinary relief, for which he looked up to Heaven with grateful devotion. He made no direct inference from this fact; but from his manner of telling it, I could perceive that it appeared to him as something more than an incident in the common course of events. For my own part, I have no difficulty to avow that cast of thinking, which, by many modern pretenders to wisdom, is called *superstitious*. But here I think even men of dry rationality may believe, that there was an intermediate[2] interposition of Divine Providence, and that "the fervent prayer of this righteous man" availed[3].

[2] [So in all the editions, though the meaning of the term *intermediate* does not seem quite clear. Perhaps Mr. Boswell may have meant *immediate*.—ED.]

[3] Upon this subject there is a very fair and judicious remark in the Life of Dr. Abernethy, in the first edition of the *Biographia Britannica*,

On Sunday, May 9, I found Colonel Vallancy [1], the celebrated antiquary and engineer of Ireland, with him. On Monday, the 10th, I dined with him at Mr. Paradise's, where was a large company: Mr. Bryant, Mr. Joddrel [2], Mr. Hawkins Browne [3], &c. On Thursday, the 13th, I dined with him at Mr. Joddrel's with another large company; the Bishop of Exeter [4], Lord Monboddo, Mr. Murphy, &c. I was sorry to observe Lord Monboddo avoid any communication with Dr. Johnson. I flattered myself that I had made them very good friends; but unhappily his lordship had resumed and cherished a violent prejudice against my illustrious friend, to whom I must do the justice to say, there was on his part not the least anger, but a good-humoured sportiveness. Nay, though he knew of his lordship's indisposition towards him, he was even kindly; as appeared from his inquiring of me, after him, by an abbreviation of his name, "Well, how does *Monny?*"

On Saturday, May 15, I dined with him at Dr. Brocklesby's, where were Colonel Vallancy, Mr. Murphy, and that ever-cheerful companion, Mr. Devaynes, apothecary to his majesty. [Indeed his friends seem to have, as it were, celebrated his recovery by a round of dinners; for he wrote on the 13th to Mrs. Thrale. Ed.

"Now I am broken loose, my friends seem willing enough to see me. On Monday I dined with Paradise; Tuesday, Hoole; Wednesday, Dr. Taylor; to-day with Joddrel; Friday, Mrs. Garrick; Saturday, Dr. Brocklesby; next Monday, Dilly."] Letters, vol. ii. p. 369.

Of these days, and others on which I saw him, I have no memorials, except the general recollection of his being able and animated in conversation, and appearing to relish society as much as the youngest man. I find only these three small particulars: When a person was mentioned, who said, "I have lived fifty-one years in this world without having had ten minutes of uneasiness;" he exclaimed, "The man who says so lies: he attempts to impose on human credulity." The Bishop of Exeter in vain observed, that men were very different. His lordship's manner was not impressive; and I learnt afterwards, that Johnson did not find out that the person who talked to him was a prelate; if he had, I doubt not that he would have treated him with more respect; for once talking of George Psalmanazar, whom he reverenced for his piety, he said, "I should as soon think of contradicting a bishop." One of the company [5] provoked him greatly by doing what he could least of all bear, which was quoting something of his own writing, against what he then maintained. "What, sir," cried the gentleman, "do you say to

'The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by [6]?'"

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which I should have been glad to see in his Life, which has been written for the second edition of that valuable work. "To deny the exercise of a particular Providence in the Deity's government of the world is certainly impious, yet nothing serves the cause of the scorner more than an incautious forward zeal in determining the particular instances of it." In confirmation of my sentiments, I am also happy to quote that sensible and elegant writer, Mr. Melmoth, in Letter viii. of his collection, published under the name of Fitzosborne. "We may safely assert, that the belief of a particular Providence is founded upon such probable reasons as may well justify our assent. It would scarce, therefore, be wise to renounce an opinion which affords so firm a support to the soul in those seasons wherein she stands in most need of assistance, merely because it is not possible, in questions of this kind, to solve every difficulty which attends them."—Boswell.

1 [Afterwards General Vallancy; an ingenious man, but somewhat of a visionary on Irish antiquities. He died in 1812, æt. 92.—Ed.]

2 [As this sheet was passing through the press, the following paragraph appeared in the daily papers: "Died, on Wednesday, 26th January, 1831, at his house in Portland place, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, Richard Paul Joddrel, Esq., F. R. S., F. A. S., D. C. L., formerly M. P. for the borough of Seaford, deputy lieutenant, and one of his majesty's justices of the peace for the counties of Oxford, Derby, Norfolk, and Middlesex. It may be recorded as an almost unprecedented instance, that Mr. Joddrel had lived to be in possession of his paternal estates eighty years, his father having died at an early age in 1751. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, and distinguished as a scholar as authour of the 'Illustrations of Euripides' and other literary works, and was the last surviving member of Dr. Johnson's [Essex-street] club. Having outlived all his contemporaries, he, melancholy to relate, of late years had outlived his own mental faculties, and it had become necessary, from insidious attempts made on his impaired understanding, to throw legal protection around his person and property. He is succeeded in his estates by his eldest son, Sir Richard Paul Joddrel, of Sall-park, in the county of Norfolk, bart."—Ed.]

3 [Bishop Newton (after giving some amusing anecdotes of Isaac Hawkins Browne, the father,) says, "He left only one son behind him, of the same name with himself, a very worthy good young man, possessed of many of his father's excellencies without his failings."—*Life*, 8vo. 110.—J. H. Markland.]

4 Dr. John Ross.—Boswell.

5 [Most probably Mr. Boswell himself, who has more than once applied the same quotation from Cibber to Johnson's retorts on him. *Ante*, vol. i. p. 265.—Ed.]

6 Verses on the death of Mr. Levett.—Boswell.

Johnson finding himself thus presented as giving an instance of a man who had lived without uneasiness, was much offended, for he looked upon such a quotation as unfair, his anger burst out in an unjustifiable retort, insinuating that the gentleman's remark was a sally of ebriety; "Sir, there is one passion I would advise you to command; when you have drunk out that glass, don't drink another." Here was exemplified what Goldsmith said of him, with the aid of a very witty image from one of Cibber's comedies: "There is no arguing with Johnson: for if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt end of it."

Another was this: when a gentleman[1] of eminence in the literary world was violently censured for attacking people by anonymous paragraphs in newspapers, he, from the spirit of contradiction, as I thought, took up his defence and said, "Come, come, this is not so terrible a crime; he means only to vex them a little. I do not say that I should do it; but there is a great difference between him and me: what is fit for Hephæstion is not fit for Alexander." Another, when I told him that a young and handsome countess had said to me, "I should think that to be praised by Dr. Johnson would make one a fool all one's life;" and that I answered, "Madam, I shall make him a fool to-day, by repeating this to him;" he said, "I am too old to be made a fool; but if you say I am made a fool, I shall not deny it. I am much pleased with a compliment, especially from a pretty woman."

On the evening of Saturday, May 15, he was in fine spirits at our Essex Head Club. He told us, "I dined yesterday at Mrs. Garrick's with Mrs. Carter[2], Miss Hannah More, and Fanny Burney. Three such women are not to be found: I know not where I could find a fourth, except Mrs. Lennox, who is superiour to them all." Boswell. "What! had you them all to yourself, sir?" Johnson. "I had them all, as much as they were had; but it might have been better had there been more company there." Boswell. "Might not Mrs. Montague have been a fourth?" Johnson. "Sir, Mrs. Montague does not make a trade of her wit; but Mrs. Montague is a very extraordinary woman: she has a constant stream of conversation, and it is always impregnated; it has always meaning." Boswell. "Mr. Burke has a constant stream of conversation." Johnson. "Yes, sir; if a man were to go by chance at the same time with Burke under a shed, to shun a shower, he would say, 'this is an extraordinary man.' If Burke should go into a stable to see his horse dressed, the ostler would say 'we have had an extraordinary man here.'" Boswell. "Foote was a man who never failed in conversation. If he had gone into a stable—" Johnson. "Sir, if he had gone into the stable, the ostler would have said, here has been a comical fellow; but he would not have respected him." Boswell. "And, sir, the ostler would have answered him; would have given him as good as he brought, as the common saying is." Johnson. "Yes, sir; and Foote would have answered the ostler. When Burke does not descend to be merry, his conversation is very superiour indeed. There is no proportion between the powers which he shows in serious talk and in jocularity. When he lets himself down to that, he is in the kennel." I have in another place[3] opposed, and I hope with success, Dr. Johnson's very singular and erroneous notion as to Mr. Burke's pleasantry. Mr. Windham now said low to me, that he differed from our great friend in this observation; for that Mr. Burke was often very happy in his merriment. It would not have been right for either of us to have contradicted Johnson at this time, in a society all of whom did not know and value Mr. Burke as much as we did. It might have occasioned something more rough, and at any rate would probably have checked the flow of Johnson's good humour. He called to us with a sudden air of exultation, as the thought started into his mind, "O! Gentlemen, I must tell you a very great thing. The Empress of Russia has ordered the 'Rambler' to be translated into the Russian language[4]; so I shall be read on the banks of the Wolga. Horace boasts that his fame would extend as far as the banks of the Rhone; now the Wolga is farther from me than the Rhone was from Horace." Boswell. "You must certainly be pleased with this, sir." Johnson. "I am pleased, sir, to be sure. A man is pleased to find he has succeeded in that which he has endeavoured to do."

One of the company mentioned his having seen a noble person driving in his carriage, and looking exceedingly well, notwithstanding his great age. Johnson. "Ah, sir, that is nothing. Bacon observes

1 [Mr. George Steevens. See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 268, and 529.—Ed.]

2 This learned and excellent lady, who has been often mentioned in these volumes, died at her house in Clarges-street, Feb. 19, 1806, in her eighty-ninth year.—Malone.

3 "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," vol. i. p. 330.—Boswell.

4 I have since heard that the report was not well founded; but the elation discovered by Johnson in the belief that it was true, showed a noble ardour for literary fame.—Boswell.

that a stout healthy old man is like a tower undermined."

On Sunday, May 16, I found him alone: he talked of Mrs. Thrale with much concern, saying, "Sir, she has done every thing wrong, since Thrale's bridle was off her neck;" and was proceeding to mention some circumstances which have since been the subject of public discussion[1], when he was interrupted by the arrival of Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury.

Dr. Douglas, upon this occasion, refuted a mistaken notion which is very common in Scotland, that the ecclesiastical discipline[2] of the church of England, though duly enforced, is insufficient to preserve the morals of the clergy, inasmuch as all delinquents may be screened by appealing to the convocation, which being never authorized by the king to sit for the despatch of business, the appeal never can be heard. Dr. Douglas observed, that this was founded upon ignorance; for that the bishops have sufficient power to maintain discipline, and that the sitting of the convocation was wholly immaterial in this respect, it being not a court of judicature, but like a parliament, to make canons and regulations as times may require.

Johnson, talking of the fear of death, said, "Some people are not afraid, because they look upon salvation as the effect of an absolute decree, and think they feel in themselves the marks of sanctification. Others, and those the most rational in my opinion, look upon salvation as conditional; and as they never can be sure that they have complied with the conditions, they are afraid."

In one of his little manuscript diaries about this time I find a short notice, which marks his amiable disposition more certainly than a thousand studied declarations. "Afternoon spent cheerfully and elegantly, I hope without offence to God or man; though in no holy duty, yet in the general exercise and cultivation of benevolence."

On Monday, May 17, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's, where were Colonel Vallancy, the Reverend Dr. Gibbons, and Mr. Capel Lofft, who, though a most zealous whig, has a mind so full of learning and knowledge, and so much exercised in various departments, and withal so much liberality, that the stupendous powers of the literary Goliath, though they did not frighten this little David of popular spirit, could no but excite his admiration. There was also Mr. Braithwaite of the post-office, that amiable and friendly man, who, with modest and unassuming manners, has associated with many of the wits of the age. Johnson was very quiescent to-day[3]. Perhaps too I was indolent. I find nothing more of him in my notes, but that when I mentioned that I had seen in the king's library sixty-three editions of my favourite Thomas à Kempis, —amongst which it was in eight languages, Latin, German, French, Italian, Spanish, English, Arabick, and Armenian,—he said he thought it unnecessary to collect many editions of a book, which were all the same, except as to the paper and print; he would have the original, and all the translations, and all the editions which had any variations in the text. He approved of the famous collection of editions of Horace by Douglas[4], mentioned by Pope, who is said to have had a closet filled with them; and he added, "every man should try to collect one book in that manner, and present it to a public library."

On Tuesday, May 18, I saw him for a short time in the morning. I told him that the mob had called out, as the king passed[5], "No Fox, no Fox!" which I did not like. He said, "They were right, sir." I said, I thought not; for it seemed to be making Mr. Fox the king's competitor. There being no audience, so that there could be no triumph in a victory, he fairly agreed with me. I said it might do very well, if explained thus, "Let us have no Fox," understanding it as a prayer to his majesty not to appoint that gentleman minister.

On Wednesday, May 19, I sat a part of the evening with him, by ourselves. I observed that the death of our friends might be a consolation against the fear of our own dissolution, because we might have more

1 [No doubt in Baretti's libellous strictures upon her. See *ante*, p. 67.—Ed.]

2 [Experience has proved that in many instances ecclesiastical discipline *cannot* be enforced but at a great pecuniary sacrifice to the individual who attempts it, and without tedious and vexatious delays. To provide a remedy for these and other evils by "inquiring into the practice and proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Courts," a commission issued in 1829.— H. Markland.]

3 [He probably was not quite at his ease in the company of Mr. Capel Lofft, if he exhibited, as Mr. Boswell seems to hint, any of his whig zeal.—Ed.]

4 [The mention by Pope, (no very delicate one,) is in the following lines of the Dunciad and the subjoined *note*:

"Bid me with Pollio sup, as well as dine,
There all the learned shall at the labour stand,
And Douglas lend his soft obstetrick hand.

"*Douglas*, a physician of great learning and no less taste; above all, curious in what related to Horace; of whom he collected every edition, translation, and comment, to the number of several hundred volumes."—*Dunciad*, b. iv. l. 392. Dr. Douglas was born in Scotland in 1675, and died in London in 1742. He published some medical works.—Ed.]

5 [To open Parliament. The Westminster election had concluded only the day before in favour of Mr. Fox, whose return, however, was delayed by the requisition for a scrutiny.—Ed.]

friends in the other world than in his. He perhaps felt this as a reflection upon his apprehension as to death, and said, with heat, "How can a man know *where* his departed friends are, or whether they will be his friends in the other world? How many friendships have you known formed upon principles of virtue? Most friendships are formed by caprice or by chance—mere confederacies in vice or leagues in folly."

We talked of our worthy friend Mr. Langton. He said, "I know not who will go to heaven if Langton does not. Sir, I could almost say *Sit anima mea cum Langtono.*" I mentioned a very eminent friend[1] as a virtuous man. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but ———— has not the evangelical virtue of Langton. ————, I am afraid, would not scruple to pick up a wench."

He however charged Mr. Langton with what he thought want of judgment upon an interesting occasion. "When I was ill," said he, "I desired he would tell me sincerely in what he thought my life was faulty. Sir, he brought me a sheet of paper, on which he had written down several texts of Scripture recommending christian charity. And when I questioned him what occasion I had given for such an animadversion, all that he could say amounted to this,—that I sometimes contradicted people in conversation. Now what harm does it do to any man to be contradicted?" BOSWELL. "I suppose he meant the *manner* of doing it; roughly and harshly." JOHNSON. "And who is the worse for that?" BOSWELL. "It hurts people of weaker nerves." JOHNSON. "I know no such weak-nerved people." Mr. Burke, to whom I related this conference, said, "It is well if, when a man comes to die, he has nothing heavier upon his conscience than having been a little rough in conversation."

Johnson, at the time when the paper was presented to him, though at first pleased with the attention of his friend, whom he thanked in an earnest manner, soon exclaimed in a loud and angry tone, "What is your drift, sir?" Sir Joshua Reynolds pleasantly observed, that it was a scene for a comedy, to see a penitent get into a violent passion and belabour his confessor. After all, I cannot but be of opinion, that as Mr. Langton was seriously requested by Dr. Johnson to mention what appeared to him erroneous in the character of his friend, he was bound as an honest man to intimate what he really thought, which he certainly did in the most delicate manner; so that Johnson himself, when in a quiet frame of mind, was pleased with it. The texts suggested are now before me, and I shall quote a few of them. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."—*Matt.* v. 5.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."—*Ephes.* v. 1, 2.

"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."—*Col.* iii. 14.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked."—1 *Cor.* xiii. 4, 5.

I have preserved no more of his conversation at the times when I saw him during the rest of this month, till Sunday, the 30th of May, when I met him in the evening at Mr. Hoole's, where there was a large company both of ladies and gentlemen. Sir James Johnston happened to say that he paid no regard to the arguments of counsel at the bar of the House of Commons, because they were paid for speaking. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, argument is argument. You cannot help paying regard to their arguments if they are good. If it were testimony, you might disregard it, if you knew that it were purchased. There is a beautiful image in Bacon[2] upon this subject: testimony is like an arrow shot from a long bow; the force of it depends on the strength of the hand that draws it. Argument is like an arrow from a crossbow, which has equal force though shot by a child[3]."

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1 [As Mr. Boswell has seldom applied the term "eminent friend" except either to Mr. Burke or Sir Joshua Reynolds, it may not be unnecessary to remind the reader that at this time Mr. Burke was fifty-four and Sir Joshua sixty-two years of age, and that the good taste, morals, and piety of both, (and more particularly of Mr. Burke, a married man of exemplary conduct—see *ante*, p. 206), forbid our believing that either of them were meant in this passage. It is to be wished that Mr. Boswell had not mentioned so offensive an allusion, or had appropriated it to the proper object.—ED.]

2 Dr. Johnson's memory deceived him. The passage referred to is not Bacon's, but Boyle's, and may be found, with a slight variation, in Johnson's Dictionary, under the word *Crossbow*. —So happily selected are the greater part of the examples in that incomparable work, that if the most striking passages found in it were collected by one of our modern book-makers, under the title of The Beauties of Johnson's Dictionary, they would form a very pleasing and popular volume.—MALONE.

3 [The anecdote, as Mr. Markland observes, is somewhat differently told by Dr. Moore in his Life of Smollet.—"In Boswell's Life of Johnson, mention is made of an observation of his re-

He had dined that day at Mr. Hoole's, and Miss Helen Maria Williams being expected in the evening, Mr. Hoole put into his hands her beautiful "Ode on the Peace[1]." Johnson read it over, and when this elegant and accomplished young lady[2] was presented to him, he took her by the hand in the most courteous manner, and repeated the finest stanza of her poem. This was the most delicate and pleasing compliment he could pay. Her respectable friend, Dr. Kippis, from whom I had this anecdote, was standing by, and was not a little gratified.

Miss Williams told me, that the only other time she was fortunate enough to be in Dr. Johnson's company, he asked her to sit down by him, which she did; and upon her inquiring how he was, he answered, "I am very ill indeed, madam. I am very ill even when you are near me; what should I be were you at a distance?"

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"May 28th, 1784.

"MADAM,—You do me wrong by imputing my omission to any captious punctiliousness. I have not yet seen Sir Joshua, and, when I do see him, I know not how to serve you. When I spoke upon your affairs[3] to him at Christmas, I received no encouragement to speak again. Reyn. MSS.

"But we shall never do business by letters. We must see one another.

"I have returned your papers, and am glad that you laid aside the thought of printing them. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

He had now a great desire to go to Oxford, as his first jaunt after his illness. We talked of it for some days, and I had promised to accompany him. He was impatient and fretful to-night, because I did not at once agree to go with him on Thursday. When I considered how ill he had been, and what allowance should be made for the influence of sickness upon his temper, I resolved to indulge him, though with some inconvenience to myself, as I wished to attend the musical meeting in honour of Handel, in Westminster-Abbey on the following Saturday.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, May 31st, 1784.

"I have one way or other been disappointed hitherto of that change of air from which I think some relief may possibly be obtained; but Boswel and I have settled our resolution to go to Oxford on Thursday. But since I was at Oxford, my convivial friend Dr. Edwards and my learned friend Dr. Wheeler are both dead, and my probabilities of pleasure are very much diminished. Why, when so many are taken away, have I been yet spared? I hope that I may be fitter to die. Letters, vol. ii. p. 350.

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specting the manner in which argument ought to be rated. As Mr. Boswell has not recorded this with his *usual precision*, and as I was present at Mr. Hoole's at the time mentioned by Mr. Boswell, I shall here insert what passed, of which I have a perfect recollection. Mention having been made that counsel were to be heard at the bar of the House of Commons, one of the company at Mr. Hoole's asked Sir James Johnston if he intended to be present. He answered, that he believed he should not, because he paid little regard to the arguments of counsel at the bar of the House of Commons. 'Wherefore do you pay little regard to their arguments, sir?' said Dr. Johnson. 'Because,' replied Sir James, 'they argue for their fee.' 'What is it to you, sir,' rejoined Dr. Johnson, 'what they argue for? You have nothing to do with their motive, but you ought to weigh their argument. Sir, you seem to confound argument with assertion; but there is an essential distinction between them. Assertion is like an arrow shot from a long bow; the force with which it strikes depends on the strength of the arm that draws it. But argument is like an arrow from a crossbow, which has equal force whether shot by a boy or a giant.' The whole company was struck with the aptness and beauty of this illustration; and one of them said, 'That is, indeed, one of the most just and admirable illustrations that I ever heard in my life.' 'Sir,' said Dr. Johnson, 'the illustration is none of mine—you will find it in Bacon.'"

It is satisfactory to find Mr. Boswell thus rather corroborated than corrected by a person who professes superiour precision. The substance is the same in both accounts, and it seems to the Editor that Mr. Boswell's narration is at least as terse and characteristic as Dr. Moore's.—ED.]

1 The peace made by that very able statesman, the Earl of Shelburne, now Marquis of Lansdown, which may fairly be considered the foundation of all the prosperity of Great Britain since that time.—BOSWELL.

2 In the first edition of my work, the epithet *amiable* was given. I was sorry to be obliged to strike it out; but I could not in justice suffer it to remain, after this young lady had not only written in favour of the savage anarchy with which France has been visited, but had, (as I have been informed by good authority) walked, without horrour, over the ground at the Thuilleries when it was strewed with the naked bodies of the faithful Swiss Guards, who were barbarously massacred for having bravely defended, against a crew of ruffians, the monarch whom they had taken an oath to defend. From Dr. Johnson she could now expect not endearment, but repulsion.—BOSWELL. [Miss Williams, like many other early enthusiasts of the French revolution, had latterly altered her opinion very considerably. She died in 1828, æt. 65.—ED.]

3 [Probably *affairs* similar to that mentioned *ante*, p. 202.—ED.]

"How long we shall stay at Oxford, or what we shall do when we leave it, neither Bozzy nor I have settled: he is for his part resolved to remove his family to London, and try his fortune at the English bar: let us all wish him success."]

In the midst of his own diseases and pains, he was ever compassionate to the distresses of others, and actively earnest in procuring them aid, as appears from a note to Sir Joshua Reynolds, of June, in these words:

"I am ashamed to ask for some relief for a poor man, to whom I hope I have given what I can be expected to spare. The man importunes me, and the blow goes round. I am going to try another air on Thursday."

Ed. [The following letter from Miss Reynolds shows that he was not a solicitor for the poor of his own acquaintance only. It seems to have been given to some poor woman as an introduction to Dr. Johnson:]

"Dover-street, July 9th.

Reyn. MSS. ["My good sir,—I could not forbear to communicate to the poor woman the hope you had given me of using your interest with your friends to raise her a little sum to enable her to see her native country again; nor could I refuse to write a line to procure her the pleasure of the confirmation of that hope.

"I am, and *always have been*, very troublesome to you; but you are, and *always have been*, very good to your obliged humble servant,

"Frances Reynolds."]

On Thursday, June 3, the Oxford post coach took us up in the morning at Boltcourt. The other two passengers were Mrs. Beresford and her daughter, two very agreeable ladies from America: they were going to Worcestershire, where they then resided. Frank had been sent by his master the day before to take places for us; and I found from the way-bill that Dr. Johnson had made our names be put down. Mrs. Beresford, who had read it, whispered me, "Is this the great Dr. Johnson?" I told her it was; so she was then prepared to listen. As she soon happened to mention, in a voice so low that Johnson did not hear it, that her husband had been a member of the American Congress, I cautioned her to beware of introducing that subject, as she must know how very violent Johnson was against the people of that country. He talked a great deal; but I am sorry I have preserved little of the conversation. Miss Beresford was so much charmed, that she said to me aside, "How he does talk! Every sentence is an essay." She amused herself in the coach with knotting. He would scarcely allow this species of employment any merit. "Next to mere idleness (said he), I think knotting is to be reckoned in the scale of insignificance; though I once attempted to learn knotting[1]: Dempster's sister (looking to me) endeavoured to teach me it, but I made no progress."

I was surprised at his talking without reserve in the publick post-coach of the state of his affairs: "I have (said he) about the world I think above a thousand pounds, which I intend shall afford Frank an annuity of seventy pounds a year." Indeed his openness with people at a first interview was remarkable. He said once to Mr. Langton, "I think I am like Squire Richard[2] in 'The Journey to London,' *I'm never strange in a strange place.*" He was truly *social*. He strongly censured what is much too common in England among persons of condition,—maintaining an absolute silence when unknown to each other; as, for instance, when occasionally brought together in a room before the master or mistress of the house has appeared. "Sir, that is being so uncivilized as not to understand the common rights of humanity."

At the inn where we stopped he was exceedingly dissatisfied with some roast mutton which we had for dinner. The ladies, I saw, wondered to see the great philosopher, whose wisdom and wit they had been admiring all the way, get into ill-humour from such a cause. He scolded the waiter, saying, "It is as bad as bad can be: it is ill-fed, ill-killed, ill-kept, and ill-drest."

He bore the journey very well, and seemed to feel himself elevated as he approached Oxford, that magnificent and venerable seat of learning, orthodoxy, and toryism. Frank came in the heavy coach, in readiness to attend him; and we were received with the most polite hospitality at the house of his old friend Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, who had given us a kind invitation. Before we were set down, I communicated to Johnson my having engaged to return to London directly for the reason I have mentioned, but that I would hasten back to him again. He was pleased that I had made this journey merely to keep him company. He was easy and placid, with Dr. Adams. Mrs. and Miss Adams, and Mrs. Kennicot, widow

[1] [See *ante*, p. 149, *n.*; but this repetition of the name renders the Editor doubtful as to the suggestion made in that note, though he cannot discover where or when Dr. Johnson could have been so familiarized with Mr. Dempster's family.—Ed.]

[2] [The remark is made by Miss Jenny, and not by her brother. It would have been ill suited to one who was originally described in the dramatis personæ as "a mere whelp."—J. H Markland.]

of the learned Hebræan [1], who was here on a visit. He soon despatched the inquiries that were made about his illness and recovery by a short and distinct narrative, and then assuming a gay air, repeated from Swift,

"Nor think on our approaching ills,
And talk of spectacles and pills."

Dr. Newton, the Bishop of Bristol, having been mentioned, Johnson, recollecting the manner in which he had been censured by that prelate [2], thus retaliated:—"Tom knew he should be dead before what he has said of me would appear. He durst not have printed it while he was alive." DR. ADAMS. "I believe his 'Dissertations on the Prophecies' is his great work." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is *Tom's* great work; but how far it is great, or how much of it is Tom's, are other questions. I fancy a considerable part of it was borrowed." DR. ADAMS. "He was a very successful man." JOHNSON. "I do n't think so, sir. He did not get very high. He was late in getting what he did get; and he did not get it by the best means. I believe he was a gross flatterer."

I fulfilled my intention by going to London, and returned to Oxford on Wednesday the 9th of June, when I was happy to find myself again in the same agreeable circle at Pembroke College, with the comfortable prospect of making some stay. Johnson welcomed my return with more than ordinary glee.

He talked with great regard of the Honourable Archibald Campbell, whose character he had given at the Duke of Argyll's table when we were at Inverary [3], and at this time wrote out for me, in his own hand, a fuller account of that learned and venerable writer, which I have published in its proper place. Johnson made a remark this evening which struck me a good deal. "I never (said he) knew a nonjuror who could reason [4]." Surely he did not mean to deny that faculty to many of their writers—to Hickes, Brett, and other eminent divines of that persuasion; and did not recollect that the seven bishops, so justly celebrated for their magnanimous resistance of arbitrary power, were yet nonjurors [5] to the new government. The nonjuring clergy of Scotland, indeed, who, excepting a few, have lately, by a sudden stroke, cut off all ties of allegiance to the house of Stuart, and resolved to pray for our present lawful sovereign by name, may be thought to have confirmed this remark; as it may be said,

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1 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 171.—ED.]

2 Dr. Newton in his Account of his own Life, after animadverting upon Mr. Gibbon's History, says, "Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets' afford more amusement; but candour was much hurt and offended at the malevolence that predominates in every part. Some passages, it must be allowed, are judicious and well written, but make not sufficient compensation for so much spleen and ill-humour. Never was any biographer more sparing of his praise, or more abundant in his censures. He seemingly delights more in exposing blemishes, than in recommending beauties; slightly passes over excellences, enlarges upon imperfections, and, not content with his own severe reflections, revives old scandal, and produces large quotations from the forgotten works of former criticks. His reputation was so high in the republick of letters, that it wanted not to be raised upon the ruins of others. But these essays, instead of raising a higher idea than was before entertained of his understanding, have certainly given the world a worse opinion of his temper. The bishop was therefore the more surprised and concerned for his townsman, for *he respected him not only for his genius and learning, but valued him much for the more amiable part of his character—his humanity and charity, his morality and religion.*" The last sentence we may consider as the general and permanent opinion of Bishop Newton; the remarks which precede it must, by all who have read Johnson's admirable work, be imputed to the disgust and peevishness of old age. I wish they had not appeared, and that Dr. Johnson had not been provoked by them to express himself not in respectful terms of a prelate whose labours were certainly of considerable advantage both to literature and religion.—BOSWELL.

3 "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," *ante*, vol. i. p. 449.—BOSWELL.

4 The Rev. Mr. Agutter has favoured me with a note of a dialogue between Mr. John Henderson and Dr. Johnson on this topick, as related by Mr. Henderson, and it is evidently so authentick that I shall here insert it:—HENDERSON. "What do you think, sir, of William Law?" JOHNSON. "William Law, sir, wrote the best piece of parenetick divinity; but William Law was no reasoner." HENDERSON. "Jeremy Collier, sir?" JOHNSON. "Jeremy Collier fought without a rival, and therefore could not claim the victory." Mr. Henderson mentioned Ken and Kettlewell; but some objections were made; at last he said, "But, sir, what do you think of Lesley?" JOHNSON. "Charles Lesley I had forgotten. Lesley *was* a reasoner, and *a reasoner who was not to be reasoned against.*"—BOSWELL. [Charles was the son of Dr. John Lesley, Bishop of Clogher in Ireland. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. Though zealous against popery and King James's popish measures, he could not reconcile his conscience to the oaths to William and Mary, and so became a nonjuror, of which party he was one of the chief literary and theological supports and ornaments. After many years of exile, he returned to his native country, and died in 1722, at his own house at Glaslough, in the county of Monaghan, where his descendants have continued to reside. The present possessor, Mr. Charles Powell Leslie, his great grandson, has represented that county in several parliaments.—ED.]

5 [Mr. Boswell is mistaken: two of the seven bishops (Lloyd, of St. Asaph's, and Trelawney, were not nonjurors.—ED.]

that the divine indefeasible hereditary right which they professed to believe, if ever true, must be equally true still. Many of my readers will be surprised when I mention that Johnson assured me he had never in his life been in a nonjuring meeting-house.

Next morning at breakfast, he pointed out a passage in Savage's "Wanderer," saying "These are fine verses." "If," said he, "I had written with hostility of Warburton in my Shakspeare, I should have quoted this couplet:

'Here Learning, blinded first, and then beguiled,
Looks dark as Ignorance, as Frenzy wild.'

You see they'd have fitted him to a *T*," (smiling.) DR. ADAMS. "But you did not write against Warburton." JOHNSON. "No, sir, I treated him with great respect both in my preface and in my notes [1]."

Mrs. Kennicot spoke of her brother, the Reverend Mr. Chamberlayne, who had given up great prospects in the Church of England, on his conversion to the Roman Catholick faith. Johnson, who warmly admired every man who acted from a conscientious regard to principle, erroneous or not, exclaimed fervently, "God bless him."

Mrs. Kennicot, in confirmation of Dr. Johnson's opinion that the present was not worse than former ages, mentioned that her brother assured her there was now less infidelity on the continent than there had been [2]; Voltaire and Rousseau were less read. I asserted, from good authority, that Hume's infidelity was certainly less read. JOHNSON. "All infidel writers drop into oblivion when personal connexions and the floridness of novelty are gone; though now and then a foolish fellow, who thinks he can be witty upon them, may bring them again into notice. There will sometimes start up a college joker, who does not consider that what is a joke in a college will not do in the world. To such defenders of religion I would apply a stanza of a poem which I remember to have seen in some old collection:

'Henceforth be quiet and agree,
Each kiss his empty brother:
Religion scorns a foe like thee,
But dreads a friend like t' other.'

The point is well, though the expression is not correct: *one*, and not *thee*, should be opposed to *t' other* [3]."

On the Roman Catholick religion he said, "If you join the papists externally, they will not interrogate you strictly as to your belief in their tenets. No reasoning papist believes every article of their faith. There is one side on which a good man might be persuaded to embrace it. A good man of a timorous disposition, in great doubt of his acceptance with God, and pretty credulous, may be glad to be of a church where there are so many helps to get to heaven [4]. I would be a papist if I could. I have fear enough; but an obstinate rationality prevents me. I shall never be a papist [5], unless on the near approach of death, of which I have a very great terrour. I wonder that women are not all papists." BOSWELL. "They are not more afraid of death than men are." JOHNSON. "Because they are less wicked." DR. ADAMS. "They are more pious." JOHNSON. "No, hang 'em, they are not more pious. A wicked fellow is the most pious when he takes to it. He 'll beat you all at piety."

He argued in defence of some of the peculiar tenets of the church of Rome. As to the giving the bread only to the laity, he said, "They may think, that in what is merely ritual [6], deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience; and I think they are as well warranted to make this alteration, as we are to substitute sprinkling in the room of the ancient baptism [7]. As to the invocation of saints,

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1 [See *ante*, p. 271.—ED.]

2 [A few years afforded lamentable evidence how utterly mistaken was this opinion.—ED.]

3 I have inserted the stanza as Johnson repeated it from memory, but I have since found the poem itself, in "The Foundling Hospital for Wit," printed at London, 1749. It is as follows:

EPIGRAM, *occasioned by a religious dispute at Bath.*

"On reason, faith, and mystery high,
Two wits harangue the table;
B———y believes he knows not why,
——— swears 'tis all a fable.
Peace, coxcombs, peace! and both agree!
N———, kiss thy empty brother;
Religion laughs at foes like thee,
And dreads a friend like t' other."—BOSWELL.

[The disputants alluded to in this epigram are supposed to have been *Bentley* (the son of the doctor and the friend of Walpole) and Beau *Nash*.—ED.]

4 [This facility, however it may, in their last moments, delude the timorous and credulous, is, as Jeremy Taylor observes, proportionably injurious if previously calculated upon. When addressing a convert to the Romish church, he says, "If I had a mind to live an *evil* life, and yet hope for heaven at last, I would be of your religion above any in the world."—*Works*, vol. xi. p. 190.—ED.]

5 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 97, where the reference to the 3d June, 1784, should have been to *this* day, the 10th.—ED.]

6 [The Bishop of Ferns very justly observes, that the sacrament is not merely *ritual*. Had it been an institution of the church of Rome, they might have modified it; but it was a solemn and specific ordinance of our Saviour himself, which no church can justifiably alter.—ED.]

7 [The Editor does not recollect any scriptural authority that primitive baptism should *necessarily* be by *immersion*. From the Acts, ii. 41., it may be inferred that 3000 persons were baptized *in Jerusalem* in one day, and the jailor of Philippi and his family were baptized hastily

he said, "Though I do not think it authorised, . appears to me, that, 'the communion of saints' in the Creed means the communion with the saints in heaven, as connected with 'The holy Catholick church.'" He admitted the influence of evil spirits upon our minds, and said, "Nobody who believes the New Testament can deny it."

I brought a volume of Dr. Hurd, the Bishop of Worcester's Sermons, and read to the company some passages from one of them, upon this text, "*Resist the Devil, and he will fly from you.*" James iv. 7. I was happy to produce so judicious and elegant a supporter[2] of a doctrine which, I know not why, should, in this world of imperfect knowledge, and therefore of wonder and mystery in a thousand instances, be contested by some with an unthinking assurance and flippancy.

After dinner, when one of us talked of there being a great enmity between Whig and Tory:—JOHNSON. "Why, not so much, I think, unless when they come into competition with each other. There is none when they are only common acquaintance, none when they are of different sexes. A Tory will marry into a Whig family, and a Whig into a Tory family, without any reluctance. But, indeed, in a matter of much more concern than political tenets, and that is religion, men and women do not concern themselves much about difference of opinion; and ladies set no value on the moral character of men who pay their addresses to them: the greatest profligate will be as well received as the man of the greatest virtue, and this by a very good woman, by a woman who says her prayers three times a day." Our ladies endeavoured to defend their sex from this charge; but he roared them down! "No, no, a lady will take Jonathan Wild as readily as St. Austin, if he has threepence more; and, what is worse, her parents will give her to him. Women have a perpetual envy of our vices: they are less vicious than we, not from choice, but because we restrict them; they are the slaves of order and fashion; their virtue is of more consequence to us than our own, so far as concerns this world."

Miss Adams mentioned a gentleman of licentious character, and said, "Suppose I had a mind to marry that gentleman, would my parents consent?" JOHNSON. "Yes, they 'd consent, and you 'd go. You 'd go, though they did not consent." MISS ADAMS. "Perhaps their opposing might make me go." JOHNSON. "O, very well;

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at night, and, as it would seem, within the purlieus of the prison (Acts xvi. 33). These baptisms could hardly have been by immersion.—ED.]

1 Waller, in his "Divine Poesie," canto first, has the same thought finely expressed:

"The church triumphant and the church below
In songs of praise their present union show:
Their joys are full, our expectation long;
In life we differ, but we join in song:
Angels and we, assisted by this art,
May sing together, though we dwell apart." BOSWELL.

2 The sermon thus opens:—"That there are angels and spirits good bad; that at the head of these last there more considerable and malignant than the rest, who in the form or under the name of a *serpent* was deeply concerned in the fall of man, and whose *head*, as the prophetick language is, the Son of Man was one day to *bruise;* that this evil spirit, though that prophecy be in part completed, has not yet received his death's wound, but is still permitted, for ends unsearchable to us, and in ways which we cannot particularly explain, to have a certain degree of power in this world, hostile to its virtue and happiness, and sometimes exerted with too much success: all this is so clear from Scripture, that no believer, unless he be first of all *spoiled by philosophy and vain deceit*, can possibly entertain a doubt of it." Having treated of *possessions*, his lordship says, "As I have no authority to affirm that there *are* now any such, so neither may I presume to say with confidence that there are *not* any." "But then, with regard to the influence of evil spirits at this day upon the SOULS of men, I shall take leave to be a great deal more peremptory.—(Then, having stated the various proofs, he adds), All this, I say, is so manifest to every one who reads the scriptures, that, if we respect their authority, the question concerning the reality of the demoniack influence upon the minds of men is clearly determined." Let it be remembered, that these are not the words of an antiquated or obscure enthusiast, but of a learned and polite prelate now alive; and were spoken, not to a vulgar congregation, but to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn. His lordship in this sermon explains the words "deliver us from evil, in the Lord's Prayer, as signifying a request to be protected from "the evil one," that is, the Devil. This is well illustrated in a short but excellent Commentary by my late worthy friend the Reverend Dr. Lort, of whom it may truly be said, *Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.*

It is remarkable that Waller, in his "Reflections on the several Petitions in that sacred Form of Devotion," has understood this in the same sense:

"Guard us from all temptations of the FOE." BOSWELL.

[Another distinguished prelate, when addressing the same learned society a few years ago (1822) on this important subject, thus expressed himself: "The text (Ephesians, vi. 11, 12) is extremely important in determining a question which has of late years arisen among christians concerning the existence of that person, or those persons, to whose influence is ascribed so large a portion of the sin and misery which in our present state surround us. I say, it is of late years this controversy has arisen, because it is certain that during more than one thousand seven hundred years the christian world (however otherwise divided) had on this point no difference of opinion."—*Heber's Sermons, preached in England.* Sermon IV.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

you 'd take one whom you think a bad man, to have the pleasure of vexing your parents. You put me in mind of Dr. Barrowby [1], the physician, who was very fond of swine's flesh. One day, when he was eating it, he said, 'I wish I was a Jew.'—'Why so?' said somebody; 'the Jews are not allowed to eat your favourite meat.'—'Because,' said he, 'I should then have the gust of eating it, with the pleasure of sinning.'"—Johnson then proceeded in his declamation.

Miss Adams soon afterwards made an observation that I do not recollect, which pleased him much: he said with a good-humoured smile, "That there should be so much excellence united with so much *depravity* is strange."

Indeed this lady's good qualities, merit, and accomplishments, and her constant attention to Dr. Johnson, were not lost upon him. She happened to tell him that a little coffee-pot, in which she had made him coffee, was the only thing she could call her own. He turned to her with a complacent gallantry:—"Do n't say so, my dear: I hope you do n't reckon my heart as nothing [2]."

I asked him if it was true, as reported, that he had said lately, "I am for the king against Fox; but I am for Fox against Pitt." Johnson. "Yes, sir: the king is my master; but I do not know Pitt; and Fox is my friend."

"Fox," added he, "is a most extraordinary man: here is a man (describing him in strong terms of objection in some respects according as he apprehended, but which exalted his abilities the more) who has divided the kingdom with Cæsar: so that it was a doubt whether the nation should be ruled by the sceptre of George the Third, or the tongue of Fox."

Dr. Wall, physician at Oxford, drank tea with us. Johnson had in general a peculiar pleasure in the company of physicians, which was certainly not abated by the conversation of this learned, ingenious, and pleasing gentleman. Johnson said, "It is wonderful how little good Radcliffe's travelling fellowships have done. I know nothing that has been imported by them; yet many additions to our medical knowledge might be got in foreign countries. Inoculation, for instance, has saved more lives than war destroys; and the cures performed by the Peruvian bark are innumerable. But it is in vain to send our travelling physicians to France and Italy and Germany, for all that is known there is known here. I 'd send them out of Christendom; I 'd send them among barbarous nations."

On Friday, June 11, we talked at breakfast of forms of prayer. Johnson. "I know of no good prayers but those in the 'Book of Common Prayer.'" Dr. Adams (in a very earnest manner). "I wish, sir, you would compose some family prayers." Johnson. "I will not compose prayers for you, sir, because you can do it for yourself. But I have thought of getting together all the books of prayers which I could, selecting those which should appear to me the best, putting out some, inserting others, adding some prayers of my own, and prefixing a discourse on prayer." We all now gathered about him, and two or three of us at a time joined in pressing him to execute this plan. He seemed to be a little displeased at the manner of our importunity, and in great agitation called out, "Do not talk thus of what is so awful. I know not what time God will allow me in this world. There are many things which I wish to do." Some of us persisted, and Dr. Adams said, "I never was more serious about any thing in my life." Johnson. "Let me alone, let me alone; I am overpowered." And then he put his hands before his face, and reclined for some time upon the table [3].

I mentioned Jeremy Taylor's using, in his forms of prayer, "I am the chief of sinners," and other such self-condemning expressions [4]. "Now, (said I) this cannot be said with truth by every man, and therefore is improper for a general printed form. I myself cannot say that I am the worst of men: I *will* not say so." Johnson. "A man may know, that physically, that is, in the real state of things, he is not the worst man; but that morally he may be so [5]. Law observes, 'that every man knows something worse of himself, than he is sure of in others.' You may not have committed such crimes as some men have done; but you do not know against what degree of light they have sinned. Besides, sir, 'the chief of sinners' is a mode of expression for 'I am a great sinner.' So St. Paul, speaking of our Saviour's having died to save sinners, says, 'of whom I am the chief:' yet he certainly did not think himself so bad as Judas Iscariot." Boswell. "But, sir, Taylor means it literally, for he founds a conceit upon it.

[1] [Dr. Barrowby died in 1758, the senior member of the college of physicians.—Ed.]

[2] [Miss Adams married, in July, 1788, Benjamin Hyett, Esq. of Painswiek, Gloucestershire.—Hall.]

[3] [Yet he had at this time composed all the prayers (except one) which Dr. Strahan afterwards published, as he stated, by Dr. Johnson's express desire.—Ed.]

[4] [Such expressions are by no means common, nor, as Boswell would lead us to suppose, is their spirit a characteristic of Taylor's Prayers. J. H. Markland.]

[5] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 170.—Ed.]

When praying for the conversion of sinners, and of himself in particular, he says, 'LORD, thou wilt not leave thy *chief* work undone.'" JOHNSON. "I do not approve of figurative expressions in addressing the Supreme Being; and I never use them. Taylor gives a very good advice: 'Never lie in your prayers; never confess more than you really believe; never promise more than you mean to perform.'" I recollected this precept in his "Golden Grove;" but his *example* for prayer contradicts his *precept*.

Dr. Johnson and I went in Dr. Adams's coach to dine with Dr. Nowell, Principal of St. Mary Hall, at his villa at Iffley, on the banks of the Isis, about two miles from Oxford. While we were upon the road, I had the resolution to ask Johnson whether he thought that the roughness of his manner had been an advantage or not, and if he would not have done more good if he had been more gentle. I proceeded to answer myself thus: "Perhaps it has been of advantage, as it has given weight to what you said; you could not, perhaps, have talked with such authority without it." JOHNSON. "No, sir; I have done more good as I am. Obscenity and impiety have always been repressed in my company [1]." BOSWELL. "True, sir; and that is more than can be said of every bishop. Greater liberties have been taken in the presence of a bishop, though a very good man, from his being milder, and therefore not commanding such awe. Yet, sir, many people who might have been benefited by your conversation have been frightened away. A worthy friend of ours has told me, that he has often been afraid to talk to you." JOHNSON. "Sir, he need not have been afraid, if he had any thing rational to say [2]. If he had not, it was better he did not talk."

Dr. Nowell is celebrated for having preached a sermon before the House of Commons, on the 30th of January, 1772, full of high Tory sentiments, for which he was thanked as usual, and printed it at their request; but, in the midst of that turbulence and faction which disgraced a part of the present reign, the thanks were afterwards ordered to be expunged [3]. This strange conduct sufficiently exposes itself; and Dr. Nowell will ever have the honour which is due to a lofty friend of our monarchical constitution. Dr. Johnson said to me, "Sir, the court will be very much to blame if he is not promoted." I told this to Dr. Nowell; and asserting my humbler, though not less zealous, exertions in the same cause I suggested, that whatever return we might, receive, we should still have the consolation of being like Butler's steady and generous royalist,

> "True as the dial to the sun,
> Although it be not shone upon [4]."

We were well entertained and very happy at Dr. Nowell's, where was a very agreeable company; and we drank "Church and King" after dinner, with true Tory cordiality.

We talked of a certain clergyman [5] of extraordinary character, who, by exerting his talents in writing on temporary topicks, and displaying uncommon intrepidity, had raised himself to affluence. I maintained that we ought not to be indignant at his success; for merit of every sort was entitled to reward. JOHNSON. "Sir, I will not allow this man to have merit. No, sir; what he has is rather the contrary: I will, indeed, allow him courage, and on this account we so far give him credit. We have more respect for a man who robs boldly on the highway, than for a fellow who jumps out of a ditch, and knocks you down behind your back. Courage is a quality so necessary for maintaining virtue, that it is always respected, even when it is associated with vice."

I censured the coarse invectives which were become fashionable in the House of Commons, and said, that if members of parliament must attack each other personally in the heat of debate, it should be done more genteelly. JOHNSON. "No, sir; that would be much worse. Abuse is not so dangerous when there is no vehicle of wit and delicacy, no subtle conveyance. The difference between coarse and refined abuse

[1] [See *ante*, p. 64.—ED.]

[2] The words of Erasmus (as my learned friend Archdeacon Kearney observes to me) may be applied to Johnson: "Qui ingenium, sensum, dictionem hominis noverant, multis non offenduntur, quibus graviter erant offendendi, qui hæc ignorarunt."—MALONE.

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 282, *note*.—ED.]

[4] [Hud. c. ii. l. 175.—ED.]

[5] [Rev. Henry Bate, who, in 1784, took the name of Dudley, was created a baronet in 1815, and died in 1824, without issue. He became first known to the world for rather an unclerical exhibition of personal prowess in a Vauxhall squabble (see *Lond. Mag.* for 1773, p. 461); he was afterwards actively connected with the public press; and in consequence of something that appeared in the *Morning Herald*, (*Post*) of which he was the proprietor, which was supposed to reflect on Lady Strathmore, he was involved in a duel (or pretended duel, *Gent. Mag.* 1810, p. 183, 1828, p. 496) with Mr. George Robinson Stoney, who soon after married the lady, and took the name of Bowes. It is singular that these remarkable events of his early life are not alluded to in the ample biography of the *Gent. Mag.* (vol. xciv. p. 273. 638). He was afterwards high in the church, and an active and respectable magistrate —ED.]

is as the difference between being bruised by a club, and wounded by a poisoned arrow."—I have since observed his position elegantly expressed by Dr. Young:

"As the soft plume gives swiftness to the dart[1],
Good breeding sends the satire to the heart."

On Saturday, June 12, there drank tea with us at Dr. Adams's, Mr. John Henderson, student of Pembroke College, celebrated for his wonderful acquirements in alchymy, judicial astrology, and other abstruse and curious learning[2]; and the Reverend Herbert Croft, who, I am afraid, was somewhat mortified by Dr. Johnson's not being highly pleased with some "Family Discourses" which he had printed; they were in too familiar a style to be approved of by so manly a mind. I have no note of this evening's conversation, except a single fragment. When I mentioned Thomas Lord Lyttelton's vision, the prediction of the time of his death, and its exact fulfilment:—JOHNSON. "It is the most extraordinary thing that has happened in my day. I heard it with my own ears, from his uncle, Lord Westcote[3]. I am so glad to have every evidence of the spiritual world, that I am willing to believe it." DR. ADAMS. "You have evidence enough; good evidence, which needs not such support." JOHNSON. "I like to have more."

Mr. Henderson, with whom I had sauntered in the venerable walks of Merton College, and found him a very learned and pious man, supped with us. Dr. Johnson surprised him not a little, by acknowledging with a look of horrour, that he was much oppressed by the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams suggested that GOD was infinitely good. JOHNSON. "That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is necessary for good upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an *individual*, therefore, he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be *sure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned." (Looking dismally.) DR. ADAMS. "What do you mean by damned?" JOHNSON (passionately and loudly). "Sent to Hell, sir, and punished everlastingly." DR. ADAMS. "I don't believe that doctrine." JOHNSON. "Hold, sir, do you believe that some will be punished at all?" DR. ADAMS. "Being excluded from Heaven will be a punishment; yet there may be no great positive suffering." JOHNSON. "Well, sir; but, if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodness simply considered; for infinite goodness would inflict no punishment whatever. There is not infinite goodness physically considered: morally there is." BOSWELL. "But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?" JOHNSON. "A man may have such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair." MRS. ADAMS. "You seem, sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer." JOHNSON. "Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer, but my Redeemer has said that he will set some on his right hand and some on his left."—He was in gloomy agitation, and said, "I'll have no more on't."—If what has now been stated should be urged by the enemies of Christianity, as if its influence on the mind were not benignant, let it be remembered, that Johnson's temperament was melancholy, of which such direful apprehensions of futurity are often a common effect. We shall presently see, that when he approached nearer to his awful change, his mind became tranquil, and he exhibited as much fortitude as becomes a thinking man in that situation.

From the subject of death we passed to discourse of life, whether it was upon the whole more happy or miserable. Johnson was decidedly for the balance of misery[4]: in confirmation of which I maintained that no man would choose to lead over again the life which he had experienced. Johnson acceded to that opinion in the strongest terms. This is an inquiry often made; and its being a subject of disquisition is a proof that much misery presses upon human feelings; for those who are conscious of a felicity of existence would never hesitate to accept of a repetition of it. I have met

[1] ['The feather does not give *swiftness*, but only serves to *guide* the arrow; so that Young's allusion is incorrect as well as Mr. Boswell's.—ED.]

[2] See an account of him, in a sermon by the Reverend Mr. Agutter.—BOSWELL. [He was a young man of very extraordinary abilities, but of strange habits and manners. He had attracted the notice of many of the first characters in Oxford, who paid him much attention. He was supposed to be well read in books which no one else reads. He took his bachelor's degree, but never got out into the world, having died in college in 1778. He was, I think, sent to college by Dean Tucker, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Agutter, Fellow of Magdalen, on the text "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."—HALL.]

[3] A correct account of Lord Lyttelton's supposed Vision may be found in Nashe's "History of Worcestershire."—*Additions and Corrections*, p. 36.—MALONE.

[4] [Here followed a very long note, or rather dissertation, by the Reverend Mr. Churton, on the subject of Johnson's opinion of the misery of human life, which the editor has thought will be read most conveniently in the Appendix.—ED.]

with very few who would. I have heard Mr. Burke make use of a very ingenious and plausible argument on this subject: "Every man," said he, "would lead his life over again; for every man is willing to go on and take an addition to his life, which, as he grows older, he has no reason to think will be better, or even so good as what has preceded." I imagine, however, the truth is that there is a deceitful hope that the next part of life will be free from the pains, and anxieties, and sorrows, which we have already felt. We are for wise purposes "Condemned to Hope's delusive Mine," as Johnson finely says; and I may also quote the celebrated lines of Dryden, equally philosophical and poetical:

"When I consider life, 't is all a cheat;
Yet, fool'd with hope, men favour the deceit;
Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay;
To-morrow's falser than the former day;
Lies worse; and while it says we shall be blest
With some new joys, cuts off what we possest.
Strange cozenage! none would live past years again;
Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain;
And from the dregs of life think to receive
What the first sprightly running could not give[1]."

It was observed to Dr. Johnson, that it seemed strange that he, who has so often delighted his company by his lively and brilliant conversation, should say he was miserable. Johnson. "Alas! it is all outside; I may be cracking my joke, and cursing the sun. *Sun, how I hate thy beams!*" I knew not well what to think of this declaration; whether to hold it as a genuine picture of his mind[2], or as the effect of his persuading himself contrary to fact, that the position which he had assumed as to human unhappiness was true. We may apply to him a sentence in Mr. Greville's "Maxims, Characters, and Reflections[3];" a book which is entitled to much more praise than it has received: "Aristarchus is charming; how full of knowledge, of sense, of sentiment. You get him with difficulty to your supper; and after having delighted every body and himself for a few hours, he is obliged to return home; he is finishing his treatise, to prove that unhappiness is the portion of man."

On Sunday, 13th June, our philosopher was calm at breakfast. There was something exceedingly pleasing in our leading a college life, without restraint and with superiour elegance, in consequence of our living in the master's house, and having the company of ladies. Mrs. Kennicott related, in his presence, a lively saying of Dr. Johnson to Miss Hannah More, who had expressed a wonder that the poet who had written "Paradise Lost," should write such poor sonnets: "Milton, madam, was a genius that could cut a Colossus from a rock, but could not carve heads upon cherry-stones."

We talked of the casuistical question, "Whether it was allowable at any time to depart from *truth*?" Johnson. "The general rule is, that truth should never be violated, because it is of the utmost importance to the comfort of life that we should have a full security by mutual faith; and occasional inconveniences should be willingly suffered, that we may preserve it. There must, however, be some exceptions. If, for instance, a murderer should ask you which way a man is gone, you may tell him what is not true, because you are under a previous obligation not to betray a man to a murderer." Boswell. "Supposing the person who wrote *Junius* were asked whether he was the authour, might he deny it?" Johnson. "I don't know what to say to this. If you were *sure* that he wrote *Junius*, would you, if he denied it, think as well of him afterwards? Yet it may be urged that what a man has no right to ask, you may refuse to communicate; and there is no other effectual mode of preserving a secret and an important secret, the discovery of which may be very hurtful to you, but a flat denial; for if you are silent, or hesitate, or evade, it will be held equivalent to a confession. But stay, sir, here is another case. Supposing the authour had told me confidentially that he had written *Junius*, and I were asked if he had, I should hold myself at liberty to deny it, as being under a previous promise, express or implied, to conceal it[4]. Now what I ought to do for the authour, may I not do for myself? But I deny the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man, for fear of alarming him[5]. You have no business with consequences; you are to tell the truth. Besides, you are not sure what effect your telling him that he is in danger may have. It may bring his distemper to a crisis, and that may cure

[1] *Aurengzebe*, Act iv. Scene 1.—Boswell.

[2] Yet there is no doubt that a man may appear very gay in company, who is sad at heart. His merriment is like the sound of drums and trumpets in a battle, to drown the groans of the wounded and dying.—Boswell.

[3] Page 139.—Boswell

[4] [See *ante*, p. 205.—Ed.]

[5] [A very eminent physician of the present day (1831) is reported to have publickly stated, that "he always kept in view his duty to preserve a patient's life as long as possible, and that for that reason he did *not* communicate to the patient himself the extent of danger that impended over him." —J. H. Markland. [Warburton says "where the terror of such a sentence may impede the doctor's endeavours to save, the pronouncing it would be very indiscreet."—*Lett. to Hurd*, p. 392.—Ed.]

aim. 'Of all lying, I have the greatest abhorrence of this, because I believe it has been frequently practised on myself."

I cannot help thinking that there is much weight in the opinion of those who have held that truth, as an eternal and immutable principle, ought upon no account whatever to be violated, from supposed previous or superiour obligations, of which every man being to judge for himself, there is great danger that we too often, from partial motives, persuade ourselves that they exist; and probably whatever extraordinary instances may sometimes occur, where some evil may be prevented by violating this noble principle, it would be found that human happiness would, upon the whole, be more perfect were truth universally preserved.

In the notes to the "Dunciad," we find the following verses addressed to Pope[1]:

"While malice, Pope, denies thy page
Its own celestial fire;
While criticks, and while bards in rage,
Admiring, won't admire:

"While wayward pens thy worth assail,
And envious tongues decry;
These times, though many a friend bewail,
These times bewail not I.

"But when the world's loud praise is thine,
And spleen no more shall blame;
When with thy Homer thou shalt shine
In one establish'd fame!

"When none shall rail, and every lay
Devote a wreath to thee;
That day (for come it will) that day
Shall I lament to see."

It is surely not a little remarkable that they should appear without a name. Miss Seward, knowing Dr. Johnson's almost universal and minute literary information, signified a desire that I should ask him who was the authour. He was prompt with his answer:—"Why, sir, they were written by one Lewis, who was either under-master or an usher of Westminster-school, and published a Miscellany, in which 'Grongar Hill' first came out[2]." Johnson praised them highly, and repeated them with a noble animation. In the twelfth line, instead of "one establish'd fame," he repeated "one unclouded flame," which he thought was the reading in former editions; but I believe was a flash of his own genius. It is much more poetical than the other.

On Monday, 14th June, and Tuesday, 15th, Dr. Johnson and I dined, on one of them, I forget which, with Mr. Mickle, translator of the "Lusiad," at Wheatley, a very pretty country place a few miles from Oxford; and on the other with Dr. Wetherell, Master of University College. From Dr. Wetherell's he went to visit Mr. Sackville Parker, the bookseller; and when he returned to us gave the following account of his visit, saying, "I have been to see my old friend, Sack. Parker; I find he has married his maid; he has done right. She had lived with him many years in great confidence, and they had mingled minds; I do not think he could have found any wife that would have made him so happy. The woman was very attentive and civil to me; she pressed me to fix a day for dining with them, and to say what I liked, and she would be sure to get it for me. Poor Sack! he is very ill indeed[3]. We parted as never to

[1] The annotator calls them "amiable verses."—Boswell. [The annotator was Pope himself.—Ed.]

[2] Lewis's verses addressed to Pope (as Mr. Bindley suggests to me) were first published in a collection of Pieces in verse and prose on occasion of "The Dunciad," 8vo. 1732. They are there called an Epigram. "Grongar Hill," the same gentleman observes, was first printed in Savage's Miscellanies, as an *Ode* (it is singular that Johnson should not have recollected this), and was *reprinted* in the same year (1726), in Lewis's Miscellany, in the form it now bears. In that Miscellany (as the Reverend Mr. Blakeway observes to me), "the beautiful poem, 'Away, let nought to love displeasing,' &c. (reprinted in Percy's Reliques, vol. i. b. iii. No. 14), first appeared." It is there said to be a translation from the ancient British. Lewis was authour of "Philip of Macedon," a tragedy, published in 1727, and dedicated to Pope: and in 1730 he published a second volume of miscellaneous poems. As Dr. Johnson settled in London not long after the verses addressed to Pope first appeared, he probably then obtained some information concerning their authour David Lewis, whom he has described as an usher of Westminster-school: yet the Dean of Westminster, who has been pleased, at my request, to make some inquiry on this subject, has not found any vestige of his having ever been employed in this situation. A late writer ("Environs of London," iv. 171,) supposed that the following inscription in the churchyard of the church of Low Leyton, in Essex, was intended to commemorate this poet: "Sacred to the memory of David Lewis, Esq. who died the 8th day of April, 1760, aged 77 years; a great favourite of the Muses, as his many excellent pieces in poetry sufficiently testify.

'Inspired verse may on this marble live,
But can no honour to thy ashes give.'

"... Also Mary, the wife of the above-named David Lewis, fourth daughter of Newdigate Owsley, Esq. who departed this life the 10th of October, 1774, aged 90 years." But it appears to me improbable that this monument was erected for the authour of the Verses to Pope, and of the tragedy already mentioned: the language both of the dedication prefixed to that piece, and of the dedication addressed to the Earl of Shaftsbury, and prefixed to the Miscellanies, 1730, denoting a person who moved in a lower sphere than this Essex squire seems to have done.—Malone.

[3] He died at Oxford in his eighty-ninth year, Dec. 10, 1796.—Malone.

meet again. It has quite broken me down." This pathetick narrative was strangely diversified with the grave and earnest defence of a man's having married his maid. I could not but feel it as in some degree ludicrous.

In the morning of Tuesday, 15th June, while we sat at Dr. Adams's, we talked of a printed letter from the reverend Herbert Croft, to a young gentleman who had been his pupil, in which he advised him to read to the end of whatever books he should begin to read. JOHNSON. "This is surely a strange advice; you may as well resolve that whatever men you happen to get acquainted with, you are to keep to them for life. A book may be good for nothing; or there may be only one thing in it worth knowing; are we to read it all through? These Voyages, (pointing to the three large volumes of 'Voyages to the South Sea'[1] which were just come out) *who* will read them through? A man had better work his way before the mast than read them through; they will be eaten by rats and mice, before they are read through; There can be little entertainment in such books; one set of savages is like another." BOSWELL. "I do not think the people of Otaheite can be reckoned savages." JOHNSON "Don't cant in defence of savages." BOSWELL. "They have the art of navigation." JOHNSON. "A dog or cat can swim." BOSWELL. "They carve very ingeniously." JOHNSON. "A cat can scratch, and a child with a nail can scratch." I perceived this was none of the *mollia tempora fandi*; so desisted.

Upon his mentioning that when he came to college he wrote his first exercise twice over, but never did so afterwards: MISS ADAMS. "I suppose, sir, you could not make them better?" JOHNSON. "Yes, madam, to be sure, I could make them better. Thought is better than no thought." MISS ADAMS. "Do you think, sir, you could make your Rambler better?" JOHNSON. "Certainly I could." BOSWELL. "I'll lay a bet, sir, you cannot." JOHNSON. "But I will, sir, if I choose. I shall make the best of them you shall pick out, better." BOSWELL. "But you may add to them. I will not allow of that." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, there are three ways of making them better; putting out, adding, or correcting."

During our visit at Oxford, the following conversation passed between him and me on the subject of my trying my fortune at the English bar. Having asked whether a very extensive acquaintance in London, which was very valuable, and of great advantage to a man at large, might not be prejudicial to a lawyer, by preventing him from giving sufficient attention to his business? JOHNSON. "Sir, you will attend to business as business lays hold of you. When not actually employed, you may see your friends as much as you do now. You may dine at a club every day, and sup with one of the members every night; and you may be as much at publick places as one who has seen them all would wish to be. But you must take care to attend constantly in Westminster Hall; both to mind your business, as it is almost all learnt there, (for nobody[2] reads now), and to show that you want to have business. And you must not be too often seen at publick places, that competitors may not have it to say, 'He is always at the play-house or at Ranelagh, and never to be found at his chambers.' And, sir, there must be a kind of solemnity in the manner of a professiona. man. I have nothing particular to say to *you* on the subject. All this I should say to any one; I should have said it to Lord Thurlow twenty years ago."

The profession may probably think this representation of what is required in a barrister who would hope for success, to be much too indulgent; but certain it is, that as

"The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,"

some of the lawyers of this age who have risen high have by no means thought it absolutely necessary to submit to that long and painful course of study which a Plowden, a Coke, and a Hale, considered as requisite. My respected friend, Mr. Langton, has shown me, in the hand-writing of his grandfather, a curious account of a conversation which he had with Lord Chief Justice Hale[3], in which that great man tells him, "That for two years after he came to the inn of court, he studied sixteen hours a day; however, his lordship added, that by this intense application he almost brought himself to his grave, though he were of a very strong constitution, and after reduced himself to eight hours; but that he would not advise any body to so much; that he thought six hours a day, with attention and constancy, was sufficient; that a man must use his body as he would his horse, and his stomach; not tire him at once, but rise with an appetite."

On Wednesday, 16th June, Dr. Johnson and I returned to London; he was not well to-day, and said very little, employing him-

[1] [Cook's voyages.—ED.]

[2] [This is very loose talk. Johnson himself, probably from constitutional nervous irritation, was impatient of reading steadily, and his extraordinary quickness at catching up, and his tenacity in retaining what he hastily read, led him to doubt that other men could be more studious.—ED.]

[3] [This interesting conversation will be found at length in Seward's "Anecdotes of distinguished Persons," iv. 489. It was contributed by Mr Langton to the editor of that work.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

Ed. [The following letters (which reached the editor too late for their chronological place) will show how violently, and on what slight grounds, the friends of Lord Lyttelton resented Johnson's treatment of him. Now, that personal feelings have subsided, the readers of the *Life* will wonder at Mr. Pepys's extravagant indignation; and we have already seen that Johnson cared so little about the matter that he was willing that the Life should have been written for him by one of Lord Lyttelton's friends [1].

"MR. PEPYS TO MRS. MONTAGUE.

"Kensington Gravel Pits, 4th August, 1781, but direct to Wimpole-street.

"DEAR MADAM,

* * * * * *

"I have within these few days received the following paragraph in a letter from a friend of mine in Ireland:—'Johnson's Characters of some Poets breathe such inconsistency, such absurdity, and such want of taste and feeling, that it is the opinion of the *Count of Narbonne* [2], Sir N. Barry, and myself, that Mrs. Montague should expose him in a short publication. He deserves it almost as much as Voltaire—if not, *Lytteltoni gratiâ*, do it yourself.'

Mont. MSS.

"I met him some time ago at Streatham [3], and such a day did we pass in disputation upon the life of our dear friend Lord Lyttelton as I trust it will never be my fate to pass again! The moment the cloth was removed he challenged me to *come out* (as he called it), and say what I had to object to his Life of Lord Lyttelton. This (you see) was a call which, however disagreeable to myself and the rest of the company, I could not but obey, and so *to it we went* for three or four hours without ceasing. He once observed that it was the *duty* of a biographer to state all the *failings* of a respectable character. I never longed to do anything so much as to assume his own principle, and to go into a *detail* which I could suppose *his* biographer might in some future time think necessary; but I contented myself with *generals*. He took great credit for not having mentioned the *coarseness of Lord Lyttelton's manners*. I told him that if he would insert *that* [4] in the next edition, I would excuse him all the rest. We shook hands, however, at parting, which put me much in mind of the parting between Jaques and Orlando—'God be with you; let us meet as *seldom* as we can! Fare you well, I hope we shall be better strangers!' We have not met again till last Tuesday, and then I must do him the justice to say that he did all in his power to show me that he was sorry for the former attack."

"MR. PEPYS TO MRS. MONTAGUE

"Tunbridge Wells, 5th Oct. 1781.

"When I read your application of the words 'Be angry and sin not,' I could not help exclaiming, 'How admirable is it to see the person who perhaps is most angry, and who has certainly the most reason to be so, the foremost to restrain, not only her own emotions, but those of others, within the bounds of justice and humanity!'

"But, my dear madam, what hurts me all this while is, not that Johnson should go unpunished, but that our dear and respectable friend should go down to posterity with that artful and studied contempt thrown up on his character which he so little deserved; and that a man who (notwithstanding the little foibles he might have) was in my opinion one of the most exalted patterns of virtue, liberality, and benevolence, not to mention the high rank which he held in literature, should be handed down to succeeding generations under the appellation *of poor Lyttelton!* This, I must own, vexes and disquiets me whenever I think of it; and had I the command of half your powers, tempered as they are with that true moderation and justice, he should not sleep within his silent grave, I do not say unrevenged (because that is not what I wish) but unvindicated, and unrescued from that contempt which has been so industriously and so injuriously thrown upon him. But enough of this subject, which must be disagreeable to us both."

Johnson's account of Lord Lyttelton's envy to Shenstone for his improvements in his grounds, &c. was confirmed by an ingenious writer. Spence was in the house for a fortnight with the Lytteltons before they offered to show him Shenstone's place.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 198.

To some lady who was praising Shenstone's poems very much, and who had an Italian greyhound lying by the fire, he said, "Shenstone holds amongst poets the same rank your dog holds amongst dogs: he has not the sagacity of the hound, the docility of the spaniel, nor the courage of the bulldog, yet he is still a pretty fellow."

Johnson spoke Latin with great fluency

[1] [*Ante*, pp. 236 and 276, *n.*—Ed.]

[2] [Robert Jephson, Esq., author of *Braganza* and the *Count de Narbonne*—see *ante*, v. i. p. 260, where there seems reason to believe that Johnson and Mr. Jephson were no great friends. He died in 1803.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 287.—Ed.]

[4] [On the principle—

"Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes"—

Pepys thought, justly enough, that a charge of *coarseness of manner* made by Johnson against Lord Lyttelton would be so ridiculous as to defeat all the rest of his censure.—Ed.]

Horace, now Earl of Orford, was often called), Johnson allowed that he got together a great many curious little things, and told them in an elegant manner. Mr. Walpole thought Johnson a more amiable character after reading his Letters to Mrs. Thrale: but never was one of the true admirers of that great man[1]. We may suppose a prejudice conceived, if he ever heard Johnson's account to Sir George Staunton, that when he made speeches in parliament for the Gentleman's Magazine, "he always took care to put Sir Robert Walpole in the wrong, and to say every thing he could against the electorate of Hanover." The celebrated Heroick Epistle, in which Johnson is satirically introduced, has been ascribed both to Mr. Walpole and Mr. Mason. One day at Mr. Courtenay's, when a gentleman expressed his opinion that there was more energy in that poem than could be expected from Mr. Walpole; Mr. Warton, the late laureate, observed, "It may have been written by Walpole, and *touchram'd* by Mason[2]."

He disapproved of Lord Hailes, for having modernised the language of the ever memorable John Hales of Eton, in an edition which his lordship published of that writer's works. "An authour's language, sir," said he, "is a characteristical part of his composition, and is also characteristical of the age in which he writes. Besides, sir, when the language is changed, we are not sure that the sense is the same. No, sir: I am sorry Lord Hailes has done this."

Here it may be observed, that his frequent use of the expression, *No, sir*, was not always to intimate contradiction: for he would say so when he was about to enforce an affirmative proposition which had not been denied, as in the instance last mentioned. I used to consider it as a kind of flag of defiance; as if he had said, "Any argument you may offer against this is not just. No, sir, it is not." It was like Falstaff's "I deny your major[3]."

Sir Joshua Reynolds having said that he took the altitude of a man's taste by his stories and his wit, and of his understanding by the remarks which he repeated; being always sure that he must be a weak man, who quotes common things with an emphasis as if they were oracles;—Johnson agreed with him; and Sir Joshua having also observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements, Johnson added, "Yes, sir; no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures."

I have mentioned Johnson's general aversion to a pun. He once, however, endured one of mine. When we were talking of a numerous company in which he had distinguished himself highly, I said, "Sir, you were a COD surrounded by smelts. Is not this enough for you? at a time too when you were not *fishing* for a compliment?" He laughed at this with a complacent approbation. Old Mr. Sheridan observed, upon my mentioning it to him, "He liked your compliment so well, he was willing to take it with *pun sauce*." [Though no

[1] In his Posthumous Works he has spoken of Johnson in the most contemptuous manner!—MALONE. [Malone doubtless alludes to the edition of Walpole's Works, in 5 vols. 4to., published in 1798; but, with the exception of the *Letters*, almost the whole of Walpole's writings had been previously given to the world. The following passage occurs in one of the letters to General Conway, "Have you got Boswell's most absurd, enormous book? The best thing in it is a bon mot of Lord Pembroke. The more one learns of Johnson, the more preposterous assemblage he appears of strong sense, of the lowest bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulness and vanity—and Boswell is the ape of most of his faults, without a grain of his sense. It is the story of a mountebank and his zany."—5th *Oct.* 1785. In a letter to Mr. Cole, published since Mr. Malone's death, Walpole says, "I have no thirst to know the rest of my cotemporaries, from the absurd bombast of Dr. Johnson down to the silly Dr. Goldsmith. Though the latter changeling has had bright gleams of parts, and the former had sense till he changed it for words and sold it for a pension."—27 *April*, 1773. The expression is smart and epigrammatic, but has, as relates to Johnson, little meaning. Johnson's *sense* and *verbosity* were cotemporaneous. Indeed his later works have fewer hard words than his first publications; so that at least he did not "*change* sense for words." As to the pension, it has been shown that Johnson did not sell his principles for it: but, at all events, he did not "*sell* his sense" in the meaning of *parting* with it. And the Quarterly Review on *Walpole's Memoirs* (March, 1822), proves that though he talked and wrote in strains of high disinterestedness, he was the last man who ought to have charged another with any *venal change* either of principles or language. As to Goldsmith, Walpole had before happily characterised him as an "*inspired idiot*"—ED.]

[2] It is now (1804) *known*, that the "Heroick Epistle" was written by Mason.—MALONE. [The Editor is satisfied, from a variety of evidence, that Walpole was concerned in this lively satire, and that the distribution of the shares given in a former note (*ante*, p. 298) is substantially correct —ED.]

[3] [Sir James Mackintosh remembers that while spending the Christmas of 1797 at Beaconsfield, Mr. Burke said to him, "Johnson showed more powers of mind in company than in his writings, but he argued only for victory; and when he had neither a paradox to defend, nor an antagonist to crush, he would preface his *assent* with, *Why, no, sir.*"—ED.]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 210. great friend to puns, ne once, by accident, made a singular one. A person who affected to live after the Greek manner, and to anoint himself with oil, was one day mentioned: Johnson, in the course of conversation on the singularity of his practice, gave him the denomination of this man of *Greece* (or *grease*, as you please to take it)]. For my own part, I think no innocent species of wit or pleasantry should be suppressed; and that a good pun may be admitted among the smaller excellencies of lively conversation.

Had Johnson treated at large *De Claris Oratoribus*, he might have given us an admirable work. When the Duke of Bedford attacked the ministry as vehemently as he could, for having taken upon them to extend the time for the importation of corn, Lord Chatham, in his first speech in the House of Lords, boldly avowed himself to be an adviser of that measure. "My colleagues," said he, "as I was confined by indisposition, did me the signal honour of coming to the bedside of a sick man, to ask his opinion. But, had they not thus condescended, I should have *taken up my bed, and walked*, in order to have delivered that opinion at the Council-board." Mr. Langton, who was present, mentioned this to Johnson, who observed, "Now, sir, we see that he took these words as he found them, without considering, that though the expression in Scripture, *take up thy bed and walk*, strictly suited the instance of the sick man restored to health and strength, who would of course be supposed to carry his bed with him, it could not be proper in the case of a man who was lying in a state of feebleness, and who certainly would not add to the difficulty of moving at all, that of carrying his bed[1]."

When I pointed out to him in the newspaper one of Mr. Grattan's animated and glowing speeches in favour of the freedom of Ireland, in which this expression occurred (I know not if accurately taken): "We will persevere, till there is not one link of the English chain left to clank upon the rags of the meanest beggar in Ireland:"—"Nay, sir," said Johnson, "do n't you perceive that *one* link cannot clank?"

Mrs. Thrale has published[2], as Johnson's, a kind of parody or counterpart of a fine poetical passage in one of Mr. Burke's speeches on American taxation. It is vigorously but somewhat coarsely executed; and I am inclined to suppose, is not quite correctly exhibited. I hope he did not use the words "*vile agents*" for the Americans in the House of Parliament; and if he did so, in an extempore effusion, I wish the lady had not committed it to writing.

Mr. Burke uniformly showed Johnson the greatest respect; and when Mr. Townshend, now Lord Sydney, at a period when he was conspicuous in opposition, threw out some reflection in parliament upon the grant of a pension to a man of such political principles as Johnson; Mr. Burke, though then of the same party with Mr Townshend, stood warmly forth in defence of his friend, to whom, he justly observed, the pension was granted solely on account of his eminent literary merit. I am well assured, that Mr. Townshend's attack upon Johnson was the occasion of his "hitching in a rhyme[3];" for that in the original copy of Goldsmith's character of Mr. Burke, in his "Retaliation," another person's name stood in the couplet where Mr. Townshend is now introduced:

> "Though fraught with all learning kept straining his throat,
> To persuade *Tommy Townshend* to lend him a vote."

It may be worth remarking among the *minutiæ* of my collection, that Johnson was once drawn to serve in the militia, the trained bands of the city of London, and that Mr. Rackstrow, of the Museum in Fleet-street, was his colonel. It may be believed he did not serve in person; but the idea, with all its circumstances, is certainly laughable. He upon that occasion provided himself with a musket, and with a sword and belt, which I have seen hanging in his closet.

He was very constant to those whom he once employed, if they gave him no reason to be displeased. When somebody talked of being imposed on in the purchase of tea and sugar, and such articles: "That will not be the case," said he, "if you go to a *stately shop*, as I always do. In such a shop it is not worth their while to take a petty advantage."

An authour of most anxious and restless vanity[4] being mentioned, "Sir," said he, "there is not a young sapling upon Parnassus more severely blown about by every wind of criticism than that poor fellow."

The difference, he observed, between a well-bred and an ill-bred man is this "One immediately attracts your liking, the other your aversion. You love the one

[1] [Lord Chatham meant, in his strong metaphorical way, to say, that his desire to do that public duty would have operated a *miracle* on him; so that Johnson's remark seems hypercritical. -Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p 275.—Ed.]

[3] [I rather believe that it was in consequence of his persisting in clearing the gallery of the House of Commons, in spite of the earnest remonstrances of Burke and Fox, one evening when Garrick was present.—Mackintosh.]

[4] [Probably Mr Perceval Stockdale. See *ante* p. 270.—Ed.]

till you find reason to hate him; you hate the other till you find reason to love him."

The wife of one of his acquaintance [1] had fraudulently made a purse for herself out of her husband's fortune. Feeling a proper compunction in her last moments, she confessed how much she had secreted; but before she could tell where it was placed, she was seized with a convulsive fit and expired. Her husband said, he was more hurt by her want of confidence in him, than by the loss of his money. "I told him," said Johnson, "that he should console himself; for *perhaps* the money might be *found*, and he was *sure* that his wife was *gone*."

A foppish physician once reminded Johnson of his having been in company with him on a former occasion: "I do not remember it, sir." The physician still insisted; adding that he that day wore so fine a coat that it must have attracted his notice. "Sir," said Johnson, "had you been dipped in Pactolus, I should not have noticed you."

He seemed to take a pleasure in speaking in his own style; for when he had carelessly missed it, he would repeat the thought translated into it. Talking of the comedy of "The Rehearsal," he said, "It has not wit enough to keep it sweet." This was easy;—he therefore caught himself, and pronounced a more round sentence: "It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction [2]."

He censured a writer of entertaining [3] Travels for assuming a feigned character, saying (in his sense of the word), "He carries out one lie; we know not how many he brings back." At another time, talking of the same person, he observed, "Sir, your assent to a man whom you have never known to falsify is a debt: but after you have known a man to falsify, your assent to him then is a favour."

Though he had no taste for painting, he admired much the manner in which Sir Joshua Reynolds treated of his art, in his "Discourses to the Royal Academy." He observed one day of a passage in them, "I think I might as well have said this myself;" and once when Mr. Langton was sitting by him, he read one of them very eagerly, and expressed himself thus: "Very well, Master Reynolds; very well, indeed. But it will not be understood."

When I observed to him that Painting was so far inferiour to Poetry, that the story or even emblem which it communicates must be previously known, and mentioned as a natural and laughable instance of this, that a little miss, on seeing a picture of Justice with the scales, had exclaimed to me, "See, there's a woman selling sweetmeats;" he said, "Painting, sir, can illustrate, but cannot inform."

[For painting he certainly had no taste, no acquired taste, for his sight was worse even than his hearing.] Reyn Reco I

[He even to Mrs. Piozzi professed such scorn of it, as to say that he should sit very quietly in a room hung round with pictures of the greatest masters, and never feel the slightest disposition to turn them, if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he had turned them. In one instance, however, he admitted that painting required a considerable exercise of mind; yet even on that occasion he betrayed what Mrs. Thrale calls his "scorn of the art." Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned some picture as excellent. "It has often grieved me, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "to see so much mind as the science of painting requires, laid out upon such perishable materials: why do not you oftener make use of copper? I could wish your superiority in the art you profess to be preserved in stuff more durable than canvas." Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring a plate large enough for historical subjects, and was going to raise farther observations: "What foppish obstacles are these!" exclaimed on a sudden Dr. Johnson: "here is Thrale has a thousand ton of copper; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterward: will it not, sir?"] Piozzi Anec. p. 76. p. 75.

[In one of his opinions, however, on this art, the Editor confesses that he entirely concurs.] Ed

[Talking with some persons about allegorical painting, he said, "I had rather see the portrait of a dog that I know, than all the allegorical paintings they can show me in the world."] Hawk. Apoph p. 208.

No man was more ready to make an apology when he had censured unjustly than Johnson. When a proof-sheet of one of his works was brought to him, he found fault with the mode in which a part of it was arranged, refused to read it, and in a passion, desired that the compositor [4] might be sent to him. The compositor was Mr. Manning, a decent sensible man, who had *composed* about one half of his "Dictiona-

[1] [Lady Knight tells this anecdote in her papers on Miss Williams (*Europ. Mag.* 1799), but she does not call the lady the wife of *one of his acquaintance*.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 116.—Ed.]

[3] [Perhaps Dr. Thomas Campbell's work on Ireland, see *ante*, vol. i. p. 516; but the Editor suspects it was some more recent publication.—Ed.]

[4] Compositor in the printing-house means, the person who adjusts the types in the order in which they are to stand for printing; and arranges what is called the *form*, from which an impression is taken.—Boswell.

ry," when in Mr. Strahan's printing-house; and a great part of his "Lives of the Poets," when in that of Mr. Nichols; and who (in his seventy-seventh year) when in Mr. Baldwin's printing-house, composed a part of the first edition of this work concerning him. By producing the manuscript, he at once satisfied Dr. Johnson that he was not to blame. Upon which Johnson candidly and earnestly said to him, "Mr. Compositor, I ask your pardon; Mr. Compositor, I ask your pardon, again and again."

His generous humanity to the miserable was almost beyond example. The following instance is well attested: coming home late one night, he found a poor woman lying in the street, so much exhausted that she could not walk; he took her upon his back and carried her to his house, where he discovered that she was one of those wretched females who had fallen into the lowest state of vice, poverty, and disease. Instead of harshly upbraiding her, he had her taken care of with all tenderness for a long time, at a considerable expense, till she was restored to health, and endeavoured to put her into a virtuous way of living[1].

Reyn. Recol. [Miss Reynolds says, that throughout her life she remembered the impression she felt in his favour the first time she was in company with Dr. Johnson, on his saying, that as he returned to his lodgings, at one or two o'clock in the morning, he often saw poor children asleep on thresholds and stalls, and that he used to put pennies into their hands to buy them a breakfast[2].]

He thought Mr. Caleb Whitefoord singularly happy in hitting on the signature of *Papyrius Cursor* to his ingenious and diverting Cross Readings of the newspapers[3]; it being a real name of an ancient Roman, and clearly expressive of the thing done in this lively conceit.

He once in his life was known to have uttered what is called a *bull:* Sir Joshua Reynolds, when they were riding together in Devonshire, complained that he had a very bad horse, for that even when going down hill he moved slowly step by step. "Ay," said Johnson, "and when he *goes* up hill he *stands still.*"

He had a great aversion to gesticulating in company. He called once to a gentleman[4] who offended him in that point, "Do n't *attitudenise.*" And when another gentleman thought he was giving additional force to what he uttered by expressive movements of his hands, Johnson fairly seized them, and held them down

An authour of considerable eminence[5] having engrossed a good share of the conversation in the company of Johnson, and having said nothing but what was trifling and insignificant, Johnson, when he was gone, observed to us, "It is wonderful what a difference there sometimes is between a man's powers of writing and of talking. ——— writes with great spirit, but is a poor talker: had he held his tongue we might have supposed him to have been restrained by modesty; but he has spoken a great deal to-day, and you have heard what stuff it was."

A gentleman having said that a *conge d'elire* has not, perhaps, the force of a command, but may be considered only as a strong recommendation:—"Sir," replied Johnson, who overheard him, "it is such a recommendation, as if I should throw you out of a two pair of stairs window, and recommend to you to fall soft[6]."

Mr. Steevens, who passed many a social hour with him during their long acquaintance, which commenced when they both lived in the Temple, has preserved a good number of particulars concerning him, most of which are to be found in the department of Apophthegms[7], &c. in the collection of

[1] The circumstance therefore alluded to in Mr. Courtenay's "Poetical Character" of him is strictly true. My informer was Mrs. Desmoulins, who lived many years in Dr. Johnson's house.—Boswell.

[2] [And this was at a time when he himself was living on *pennies.*—Ed.]

[3] [He followed his *Cross Readings* by a still more witty paper on the *Errors of the Press.* These two laughable essays are preserved in the Foundling Hospital for Wit, and some similar publications.—Ed.]

[4] [This is supposed to have been Sir Richard Musgrave (*ante*, p. 346), who had, it must be confessed, a great eagerness of manner. One day when Sir Richard was urging him with singular warmth to write the lives of the prose writers, and getting up to enforce his suit, Johnson coldly replied, "Sit down, sir." *Piozzi*, p. 225.—Ed.]

[5] [Perhaps Doctor Robertson. See *ante*, p. 189.—Ed.]

[6] This has been printed in other publications "fall *to the ground.*" But Johnson himself gave me the true expression which he had used as above; meaning that the recommendation left as little choice in that one case as the other.—Boswell.

[7] [This is Sir J. Hawkins's collection of *Johnsoniana*, referred to *ante*, p. 63. Such of these anecdotes as were also given by Mr. Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi have been quoted from *them.* Some others have been selected by the editor and placed near corresponding passages of Mr. Boswell's text. The remainder, for which no particular place occurred or which were accidentally overlooked, will be here given in continuation of those supplied by Mr. Steevens, by whom Mr. Boswell (ever anxious to depreciate the merit of Sir J. Hawkins) intimates that "most of them" were originally furnished. Mr. Chalmers says that they were certainly chiefly collected by Steevens, and published by him in the St. James's Chronicle.—Ed.]

"Johnson's Works." But he has been pleased to favour me with the following, which are original:

Steevens. "One evening, previous to the trial of Baretti, a consultation of his friends was held at the house of Mr. Cox, the solicitor, in Southampton-buildings, Chancery-lane. Among others present were Mr. Burke and Dr. Johnson, who differed in sentiments concerning the tendency of some part of the defence the prisoner was to make. When the meeting was over, Mr. Steevens observed that the question between him and his friend had been agitated with rather too much warmth. 'It may be so, sir,' replied the Doctor, 'for Burke and I should have been of one opinion if we had had no audience [1].'

"Dr. Johnson once assumed a character in which perhaps even Mr. Boswell never saw him. His curiosity having been excited by the praises bestowed on the celebrated Torre's fireworks at Marybone-gardens, he desired Mr. Steevens to accompany him thither. The evening had proved showery, and soon after the few people present were assembled, publick notice was given that the conductors of the wheels, suns, stars, &c. were so thoroughly watersoaked that it was impossible any part of the exhibition should be made. 'This is a mere excuse,' says the Doctor, 'to save their crackers for a more profitable company. Let us both hold up our sticks and threaten to break those coloured lamps that surround the orchestra, and we shall soon have our wishes gratified. The core of the fireworks cannot be injured; let the different pieces be touched in their respective centres, and they will do their offices as well as ever.' Some young men who overheard him immediately began the violence he had recommended, and an attempt was speedily made to fire some of the wheels which appeared to have received the smallest damage; but to little purpose were they lighted, for most of them completely failed. The authour of 'The Rambler,' however, may be considered on this occasion as the ringleader of a successful riot, though not as a skilful pyrotechnist.

"It has been supposed that Dr. Johnson, so far as fashion was concerned, was careless of his appearance in publick. But this is not altogether true, as the following slight instance may show:—Goldsmith's last comedy was to be represented during some court-mourning [2], and Mr. Steevens appointed to call on Dr. Johnson, and carry him to the tavern where he was to dine with other of the poet's friends. The Doctor was ready dressed, but in coloured clothes; yet being told that he would find every one else in black, received the intelligence with a profusion of thanks, hastened to change his attire, all the while repeating his gratitude for the information that had saved him from an appearance so improper in the front row of a front box. 'I would not,' added he, 'for ten pounds have seemed so retrograde to any general observance.'

"He would sometimes found his dislikes on very slender circumstances. Happening one day to mention Mr. Flexman, a dissenting minister, with some compliment to his exact memory in chronological matters; the Doctor replied, 'Let me hear no more of him, sir. That is the fellow who made the index to my Ramblers, and set down the name of Milton thus:—Milton, *Mr.* John.'"

Mr. Steevens adds this testimony: "It is unfortunate, however, for Johnson, that his particularities and frailties can be more distinctly traced than his good and amiable exertions. Could the many bounties he studiously concealed, the many acts of humanity he performed in private, be displayed with equal circumstantiality, his defects would be so far lost in the blaze of his virtues, that the latter only would be regarded."

[Dr. Johnson said he always mistrusted romantick virtue, as thinking it founded on no fixed principle. Hawk. Apoph. p. 197–8.

He used to say that where secrecy or mystery began, vice or roguery was not far off.

Being once asked if he ever embellished a story—"No," said he; "a story is to lead either to the knowledge of a fact or character, and is good for nothing if it be not strictly and literally true [3]."

"Round numbers," said he, "are always false."

"Watts's Improvement of the Mind" was a very favourite book with him; he used to recommend it, as he also did "Le Dictionnaire portatif" of the Abbé L'Avocat.

He has been accused of treating Lord Lyttelton roughly in his life of him; he assured a friend, however, that he kept back a very ridiculous anecdote of him, relative to a question he put to a great divine of his time.]

[1] [What an extraordinary assertion, that in a matter in which the life and death—nay, the ignominious death—of a friend was at stake, he still talked for victory! The Editor has seen so much reason to distrust anecdotes told from memory, that he hesitates to give implicit credit to this story. Dr. Johnson, no doubt, too often talked for victory, but not, it is to be hoped, on so serious an occasion.—Ed.]

[2] ["*She Stoops to Conquer*," first acted in March, 1773, during a court mourning for the king of Sardinia.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 32.—Ed.]

self chiefly in reading Euripides. He expressed some displeasure at me for not observing sufficiently the various objects upon the road. "If I had your eyes, sir," said he, "I should count the passengers." It was wonderful how accurate his observation of visual objects was, notwithstanding his imperfect eyesight, owing to a habit of attention. That he was much satisfied with the respect paid to him at Dr. Adams's is thus attested by himself: "I returned last night from Oxford, after a fortnight's abode with Dr. Adams, who treated me as well as I could expect or wish; and he that contents a sick man, a man whom it is impossible to please, has surely done his part well." [He adds, "I went in the common vehicle, with very little fatigue, and came back I think with less."]

Letters, vol. ii. p. 372. Ed.

After his return to London from this excursion, I saw him frequently, but have few memorandums; I shall therefore here insert some particulars which I collected at various times.

The Reverend Mr. Astle, of Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, brother to the learned and ingenious Thomas Astle, Esq. was from his early years known to Dr. Johnson, who obligingly advised him as to his studies, and recommended to him the following books, of which a list which he has been pleased to communicate lies before me, in Johnson's own hand-writing:—"Universal History (ancient)—Rollin's Ancient History—Puffendorf's Introduction to History—Vertot's History of Knights of Malta—Vertot's Revolution of Portugal—Vertot's Revolution of Sweden—Carte's History of England—Present State of England—Geographical Grammar—Prideaux's Connexion—Nelson's Feasts and Fasts—Duty of Man—Gentleman's Religion—Clarendon's History—Watts's Improvement of the Mind—Watts's Logick—Nature Displayed—Lowth's English Grammar—Blackwall on the Classicks—Sherlock's Sermons—Burnet's Life of Hale—Dupin's History of the Church—Shuckford's Connexions—Law's Serious Call—Walton's Complete Angler—Sandys's Travels—Sprat's History of the Royal Society—England's Gazetteer—Goldsmith's Roman History—Some Commentaries on the Bible."

It having been mentioned to Dr. Johnson that a gentleman who had a son whom he imagined to have an extreme degree of timidity, resolved to send him to a publick school, that he might acquire confidence: "Sir," said Johnson, "this is a preposterous expedient for removing his infirmity; such a disposition should be cultivated in the shade. Placing him at a publick school is forcing an owl upon day."

Speaking of a gentleman whose house was much frequented by low company. "Rags, sir," said he, "will always make their appearance where they have a right to do it."

Of the same gentleman's mode of living, he said, "Sir, the servants, instead of doing what they are bid, stand round the table in idle clusters, gaping upon the guests; and seem as unfit to attend a company, as to steer a man of war."

A dull country magistrate gave Johnson a long, tedious account of his exercising his criminal jurisdiction, the result of which was his having sentenced four convicts to transportation. Johnson, in an agony of impatience to get rid of such a companion, exclaimed, "I heartily wish, sir, that I were a fifth."

Johnson was present when a tragedy was read, in which there occurred this line:

"Who rules o' er freemen should himself be free."

The company having admired it much, "I cannot agree with you," said Johnson: "it might as well be said,

"Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat[1]."

He was pleased with the kindness of Mr. Cator, who was joined with him in Mr. Thrale's important trust, and thus describes him: "There is much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge." He found a cordial solace at that gentleman's seat at Beckenham, in Kent, which is indeed one of the finest places at which I ever was a guest; and where I find more and more a hospitable welcome.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 284.

Johnson seldom encouraged general censure of any profession; but he was willing to allow a due share of merit to the various departments necessary in civilised life. In a splenetick, sarcastical, or jocular frame of mind, however, he would sometimes utter a pointed saying of that nature. One instance has been mentioned[2], where he gave a sudden satirical stroke to the character of an *attorney*. The too indiscriminate admission to that employment, which requires both abilities and integrity, has given rise to injurious reflections, which are totally inapplicable to many very respectable men who exercise it with reputation and honour.

Johnson having argued for some time with a pertinacious gentleman; his opponent, who had talked in a very puzzling manner, happened to say, "I do n't understand you, sir;" upon which Johnson observed, "Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an understanding."

Talking to me of Horry Walpole (as

[1] [*Ante*, p. 115.—Ed.]

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 171.—Boswell

and elegance. He said, indeed, he had taken great pains about it.

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Sumner of Harrow were dining one day, with many other persons, at Mrs. Macaulay's[1]. She had talked a long time at dinner about the natural equality of mankind. Johnson, when she had finished her harangue, rose up from the table, and with great solemnity of countenance, and a bow to the ground, said to the servant, who was waiting behind his chair, "Mr. John, pray be seated in my place, and permit me to wait upon you in my turn: your mistress says, you hear, that we are all equal."

Being asked whether he had read Mrs. Macaulay's second volume of the "History of England"—"No, sir," says he, "nor her first neither."

When some one was lamenting Foote's unlucky fate in being kicked in Dublin, Johnson said he was glad of it. "He is rising in the world (said he): when he was in England, no one thought it worth while to kick him."

He was much pleased with the following repartee: *Fiat experimentum in corpore vili*, said a French physician to his colleague, in speaking of the disorder of a poor man that understood Latin, and who was brought into an hospital; *Corpus non tam vile est*, says the patient, *pro quo Christus ipse non dedignatus est mori.*

Johnson used to say a man was a scoundrel that was afraid of any thing.

To his censure of fear[2] in general, he made, however, one exception—with respect to the fear of death, *timorum maximus:* he thought that the best of us were but unprofitable servants, and had much reason to fear.

When some one asked him whether they should introduce Hugh Kelly, the authour, to him—"No, sir," says he, "I never desire to converse with a man who has written more than he has read:" yet when his play was acted for the benefit of his widow, Johnson furnished a prologue.

He repeated poetry with wonderful energy and feeling. He was seen to weep whilst he repeated Goldsmith's character of the English in his "Traveller," beginning "*Stern o'er each bosom*[3]," *&c.*

He held all authours very cheap that were not satisfied with the opinion of the publick about them. He used to say that every man who writes thinks he can amuse or inform mankind, and they must be the best judges of his pretensions.

He thought worse of the vices of retirement than of those of society.

He attended Mr. Thrale in his last moments, and stayed in the room praying, as is imagined, till he had drawn his last breath. "His servants," said he, "would have waited upon him in this awful period, and why not his friend?"

He was extremely fond of reading the lives of great and learned persons. Two or three years before he died, he applied to a friend of his to give him a list of those in the French language that were well written and genuine. He said that Bolingbroke had declared he could not read Middleton's "Life of Cicero."

He was not apt to judge ill of persons without good reasons: an old friend of his used to say that in general he thought too well of mankind.

One day, on seeing an old terrier lie asleep by the fireside at Streatham, he said, "Presto, you are, if possible, a more lazy dog than I am."

Being told that Churchill had abused him under the character of Pomposo, in his Ghost, "I always thought," said he, "he was a shallow fellow, and I think so still."

The Duke of * * * once said to Johnson, "that every religion had a certain degree of morality in it." "Ay, my lord," answered he, "but the Christian religion alone puts it on its proper basis."

The picture of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which was painted for Mr. Beauclerk, and is now Mr. Langton's, and scraped in mezzotinto by Doughty, is extremely like him: there is in it that appearance of a labouring working mind, of an indolent reposing body, which he had to a very great degree. Indeed, the common operations of dressing, shaving, &c. were a toil to him he held the care of the body very cheap. He used to say, that a man who rode out for an appetite consulted but little the dignity of human nature

"The Life of Charles XII.," by Voltaire, he said was one of the finest pieces of history ever written.

He used to say something tantamount to this: When a woman affects learning, she makes a rivalry between the two sexes for the same accomplishments, which ought not to be, their provinces being different Milton said before him,

> "For contemplation he and valour form'd,
> For softness she and sweet attractive grace."

And upon hearing a lady of his acquaintance commended for her learning, he said, "A man is in general better pleased when he has a good dinner upon his table than when his wife talks Greek. My old friend

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 200. and p. 77 of this volume.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 500.—Ed.]

[3] [A favourite passage, see *ante*, vol. i. p. 114.—Ed.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 151.—Ed.]

Mrs. Carter," he added, "could make a pudding as well as translate Epictetus from the Greek, and work a handkerchief as well as compose a poem." He thought, however, that she was too reserved in conversation upon subjects she was so eminently able to converse upon, which was occasioned by her modesty and fear of giving offence.

He said that when he first conversed with Mr. Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, he was very much inclined to believe he had been there; but that he had afterwards altered his opinion.

He was much pleased with Dr. Jortin's[1] Sermons, the language of which he thought very elegant; but thought his "Life of Erasmus" a dull book.

He thought Cato the best model of tragedy we had; yet he used to say, of all things, the most ridiculous would be to see a girl cry at the representation of it.

He thought the happiest life was that of a man of business, with some literary pursuits for his amusement; and that in general no one could be virtuous or happy that was not completely employed.

Johnson had read much in the works of Bishop Taylor: in his Dutch "Thomas à Kempis" he has quoted him occasionally in the margin.

He is said to have very frequently made sermons for clergymen at a guinea a-piece.

He had a great opinion of the knowledge procured by conversation with intelligent and ingenious persons. His first question concerning such as had that character was ever, "What is his conversation?"

Speaking one day of tea, he said, "What a delightful beverage must that be that pleases all palates at a time when they can take nothing else at breakfast!"

Speaking of schoolmasters, he used to say they were worse than the Egyptian taskmasters of old. "No boy," says he, "is sure any day he goes to school to escape a whipping. How can the schoolmaster tell what the boy has really forgotten, and what he has neglected to learn? what he has had no opportunities of learning, and what he has taken no pains to get at the knowledge of? yet for any of these, however difficult they may be, the boy is obnoxious to punishment."

Of a member of parliament, who, after having harangued for some hours in the house of commons, came into a company where Johnson was, and endeavou ed to talk him down, he said, "This man has a pulse in his tongue[2]."

One who had long known Johnson said of him, "In general you may tell what the man to whom you are speaking will say next: this you can never do of Johnson: his images, his allusions, his great powers of ridicule, throw the appearance of novelty upon the most common conversation."

He was extremely fond of Dr. Hammond's[3] works, and sometimes gave them as a present to young men going into orders: he also bought them for the library at Streatham.

He said he was always hurt when he found himself ignorant of any thing.

He was extremely accurate in his computation of time. He could tell how many heroick Latin verses could be repeated in such a given portion of it, and was anxious that his friends should take pains to form in their minds some measure for estimating the lapse of it.

"Complainers," said he, "are always loud and clamorous."

He thought highly of Mandeville's "Treatise on the Hypochondriacal Disease."

"I wrote," said Johnson, "the first seventy lines in the 'Vanity of Human Wishes'[4] in the course of one morning, in that small house beyond the church at Hampstead. The whole number was composed before I committed a single couplet to writing. The same method I pursued in regard to the Prologue on opening Drury-lane Theatre. I did not afterwards change more than a word in it, and that was done at the remonstrance of Garrick. I did not think his criticism just, but it was necessary that he should be satisfied with what he was to utter."

To a gentleman who expressed himself in disrespectful terms of Blackmore, one of whose poetick bulls he happened just then to recollect, Dr. Johnson answered, "I hope, sir, a blunder, after you have heard what I shall relate, will not be reckoned decisive against a poet's reputation. When I was a young man, I translated Addison's Latin poem on the Battle of the Pygmies and the Cranes, and must plead guilty to the following couplet:

Down from the guardian boughs the nests they flung,
And kill'd the yet unanimated young.

And yet I trust I am no blockhead. I af-

[1] [See *ante*, p. 151.—Ed.]

[2] [The Editor does not see the point of this.—Ed.]

[3] [Henry Hammond, D. D., born in 1605; elected a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1625; canon of Christ church, 1645. He suffered much persecution during the Rebellion, and was, it is said, designed for the bishoprick of Worcester at the Restoration; but he died a few days before the king's return. He was a very voluminous writer, but his best known work is "A Paraphrase and Annotations on the New Testament," which Dr. Johnson recommended to Mr. Boswell. *Ante*, p. 71.—Ed.]

[4] [See *ante*. vol. i. p. 76.—Ed.]

terwards changed the word *kill'd* into *crush'd*"

"I am convinced," said he to a friend, "I ought to be present at divine service [1] more frequently than I am; but the provocations given by ignorant and affected preachers too often disturb the mental calm which otherwise would succeed to prayer. I am apt to whisper to myself on such occasions, How can this illiterate fellow dream of fixing attention, after we have been listening to the sublimest truths, conveyed in the most chaste and exalted language, throughout a liturgy which must be regarded as the genuine offspring of piety impregnated by wisdom! Take notice, however, though I make this confession respecting myself, I do not mean to recommend the fastidiousness that sometimes leads me to exchange congregational for solitary worship." He was at Streatham church when Dodd's first application to him was made, and went out of his pew immediately, to write an answer to the letter he had received. Afterwards, when he related this circumstance, he added, "I hope I shall be pardoned, if once I deserted the service of God for that of man."

His knowledge in manufactures was extensive, and his comprehension relative to mechanical contrivances was still more extraordinary. The well-known Mr. Arkwright pronounced him to be the only person who on a first view understood both the principle and powers of his most complicated piece of machinery.

He would not allow the verb *derange*, a word at present much in use, to be an English word. "Sir," said a gentleman who had some pretensions to literature, "I have seen it in a book." "Not in a *bound* book," said Johnson; "*disarrange* is the word we ought to use instead of it [2]."

He thought very favourably of the profession of the law, and said that the sages thereof, for a long series backward, had been friends to religion. Fortescue says that their afternoon's employment was the study of the scriptures [3].]

Though, from my very high admiration of Johnson, I have wondered that he was not courted by all the great and all the eminent persons of his time, it ought fairly to be considered, that no man of humble birth, who lived entirely by literature, in short no authour by profession, ever rose in this country into that personal notice which he did. In the course of this work a numerous variety of names has been mentioned, to which many might be added. I cannot omit Lord and Lady Lucan [4], at whose house he often enjoyed all that an elegant table and the best company can contribute to happiness: he found hospitality united with extraordinary accomplishments, and embellished with charms of which no man could be insensible.

On Tuesday, 22d June, I dined with him at the Literary Club, the last time of his being in that respectable society. The other members present were the Bishop of St. Asaph, Lord Eliot, Lord Palmerston Dr. Fordyce, and Mr. Malone. He looked ill, but had such a manly fortitude, that he did not trouble the company with melancholy complaints. They all showed evident marks of kind concern about him, with which he was much pleased, and he exerted himself to be as entertaining as his indisposition allowed him.

The anxiety of his friends to preserve so estimable a life as long as human means might be supposed to have influence, made them plan for him a retreat from the severity of a British winter to the mild climate of Italy. This scheme was at last brought to a serious resolution at General Paoli's, where I had often talked of it. One essential matter, however, I understood was necessary to be previously settled, which was obtaining such an addition to his income as would be sufficient to enable him to defray the expense in a manner becoming the first literary character of a great nation, and, independent of all his other merits, the authour of the "Dictionary of the English Language." The person to whom I above all others thought I should apply to negotiate this business was the lord chancellor, because I knew that he highly valued Johnson, and that Johnson highly valued his lordship, so that it was no degradation of my illustrious friend to solicit for him the favour of such a man. I have mentioned what Johnson said of him to me

[1] [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 225.—Ed.]

[2] [Even so late as the year 1795, a writer in the *British Critic* censured as a gallicism Mr. Burke's use of *derange* for *disarrange*.—Ed.]

[3] [Lord Coke, in his Institutes, l. 2. c. 1. s. 85. quotes these ancient, as he calls them, verses, recommending a proper distribution of the time of a law-student.

"Sex horæ somno, totidem des legibus æquis,
Quatuor orabis, des epulisque duas
Quod super esteultrò sacris largire Camænis."

Of these Sir William Jones made two versions:

"Six hours to sleep, to law's grave study six;
Four spend in prayer—the rest on nature fix:"

rather (he adds),

"Six hours to law, to soothing slumber seven;
Ten to the world allot, and all to Heaven."

It is not very clear what *nature* in the first version means: in the second Sir William has shortened his day to twenty-three hours: and the general advice "of *all to Heaven*" destroys the peculiar appropriation of a certain period to religious exercises. The following version, if less poetical, is at least more exact:

"*Six hours to sleep devote—to law the same,*
Pray four, feast two—the rest the muses claim."—Ed.]

[4] [See *ante*, p. 56, *n.*, where Lord Lucan (though not an English peer) should have been noted as an exception.—Ed.]

when he was at the bar[1]; and after his lordship was advanced to the seals, he said of him, "I would prepare myself for no man in England but Lord Thurlow. When I am to meet with him, I should wish to know a day before[2]." How he would have prepared himself, I cannot conjecture. Would he have selected certain topicks, and considered them in every view, so as to be in readiness to argue them at all points? and what may we suppose those topicks to have been? I once started the curious inquiry to the great man who was the subject of this compliment: he smiled, but did not pursue it.

I first consulted with Sir Joshua Reynolds, who perfectly coincided in opinion with me; and I therefore, though personally very little known to his lordship, wrote to him[3], stating the case, and requesting his good offices for Dr. Johnson. I mentioned that I was obliged to set out for Scotland early in the following week, so that if his lordship should have any commands for me as to this pious negotiation, he would be pleased to send them before that time, otherwise Sir Joshua Reynolds would give all attention to it.

[The following is a copy of this letter:

"MR. BOSWELL TO LORD THURLOW.

"General Paoli's, Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square, 24th June, 1784.

Reyn. MSS. "My lord,—Dr. Samuel Johnson, though wonderfully recovered from a complication of dangerous illness, is by no means well, and I have reason to think that his valuable life cannot be preserved long without the benignant influence of a southern climate.

"It would therefore be of very great moment were he to go to Italy before winter sets in; and I know he wishes it much. But the objection is, that his pension of three hundred pounds a year would not be sufficient to defray his expense, and make it convenient for M. Sastres, an ingenious and worthy native of that country, and a teacher of Italian here, to accompany him

"As I am well assured of your lordship's regard for Dr. Johnson, I presume, without his knowledge, so far to indulge my anxious concern for him, as to intrude upon your lordship with this suggestion, being persuaded that if a representation of the matter were made to his majesty by proper authority, the royal bounty would be extended in a suitable manner.

"Your lordship, I cannot doubt, will forgive me for taking this liberty. I even flatter myself you will approve of it. I am to set out for Scotland on Monday morning, so that if your lordship should have any commands for me as to this pious negotiation, you will be pleased to send them before that time. But Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whom I have consulted, will be here, and will gladly give all attention to it. I am, with very great respect, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."]

This application was made not only without any suggestion on the part of Johnson himself, but was utterly unknown to him, nor had he the smallest suspicion of it. Any insinuations, therefore, which since his death have been thrown out, as if he had stooped to ask what was superfluous, are without any foundation. But, had he asked it, it would not have been superfluous; for though the money he had saved proved to be more than his friends imagined, or than I believe he himself, in his carelessness concerning worldly matters, knew it to be, had he travelled upon the continent, an augmentation of his income would by no means have been unnecessary.

On Wednesday, June 23, I visited him in the morning, after having been present at the shocking sight[4] of fifteen men executed before Newgate. I said to him I was sure that human life was not machinery, that is to say, a chain of fatality planned and directed by the Supreme Being as it had in it so much wickedness and misery, so many instances of both, as that by which my mind was now clouded. Were it machinery, it would be better than it is in these respects, though less noble, as not being a

[1] [See *ante*, p. 401.—ED.]

[2] [As this was not said to Mr. Boswell himself, the Editor ventures to disbelieve that it was said at all. It is very nearly nonsense, and the kind of nonsense the least like any thing that Doctor Johnson could say. Mr. Boswell, it seems, repeated the story to Lord Thurlow, and his lordship "*smiled*"—perhaps at so direct and awkward an attempt at flattery.—ED.]

[3] It is strange that Sir John Hawkins should have related that the application was made by Sir Joshua Reynolds, when he could so easily have been informed of the truth by inquiring of Sir Joshua. Sir John's carelessness to ascertain facts is very remarkable.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell is, as usual, unjust towards Sir J. Hawkins. Johnson's own letter of thanks to Lord Thurlow mentions Sir Joshua as the channel of communication on the subject, and does not allude to Boswell; so that Hawkins had no reason to suspect that Mr. Boswell had any thing to do with it; and we shall see by and by some reason to suspect that Sir Joshua was not anxious that Mr. Boswell's name should appear in the transaction. The Editor cannot guess why Mr. Boswell did not print his own letter to Lord Thurlow, which is now given from a copy in his hand, in the Reynolds papers. —ED.]

[4] [A shocking sight indeed!—but Mr. Boswell was fond of enjoying those shocking sights, which yet, he said, "clouded his mind."—ED.]

system of moral government. He agreed with me now, as he always did, upon the great question of the liberty of the human will, which has been in all ages perplexed with so much sophistry: "But, sir, as to the doctrine of necessity, no man believes it. If a man should give me arguments that I do not see, though I could not answer them, should I believe that I do not see?" It will be observed, that Johnson at all times made the just distinction between doctrines *contrary* to reason, and doctrines *above* reason.

Talking of the religious discipline proper for unhappy convicts, he said, "Sir, one of our regular clergy will probably not impress their minds sufficiently: they should be attended by a methodist preacher [1], or a popish priest." Let me however observe, in justice to the Reverend Mr. Vilette, who has been ordinary of Newgate for no less than eighteen years, in the course of which he has attended many hundreds of wretched criminals, that his earnest and humane exhortations have been very effectual. His extraordinary diligence is highly praiseworthy, and merits a distinguished reward.[2]

On Thursday, June 24, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's, where were the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Knox, master of Tunbridge School, Mr. Smith, vicar of Southill, Dr. Beattie, Mr. Pinkerton, author of various literary performances [3], and the Rev. Dr. Mayo. At my desire old Mr. Sheridan was invited, as I was earnest to have Johnson and him brought together again by chance, that a reconciliation might be effected. Mr. Sheridan happened to come early, and having learnt that Dr. Johnson was to be there, went away; so I found, with sincere regret, that my friendly intentions were hopeless [4]. I recollect nothing that passed this day, except Johnson's quickness, who, when Dr. Beattie observed, as something remarkable which had happened to him, that he had chanced to see both No. 1 and No. 1000 of the hackney-coaches, the first and the last—"Why, sir," said Johnson, "there is an equal chance for one's seeing those two numbers as any other two." He was clearly right; yet the seeing of the two extremes, each of which is in some degree more conspicuous than the rest, could not but strike one in a stronger manner than the sight of any other two numbers.—Though I have neglected to preserve his conversation, it was perhaps at this interview that Dr. Knox formed the notion of it which he has exhibited in his "Winter Evenings."

On Friday, June 25, I dined with him at General Paoli's, where, he says in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, "I love to dine." There was a variety of dishes much to his taste, of all which he seemed to me to eat so much, that I was afraid he might be hurt by it; and I whispered to the General my fear, and begged he might not press him. "Alas!" said the General, "see how very ill he looks; he can live but a very short time. Would you refuse any slight gratifications to a man under sentence of death? There is a humane custom in Italy, by which persons in that melancholy situation are indulged with having whatever they like best to eat and drink, even with expensive delicacies."

I showed him some verses on Lichfield by Miss Seward, which I had that day received from her, and had the pleasure to hear him approve of them. He confirmed to me the truth of a high compliment which I had been told he had paid to that lady, when she mentioned to him "The Columbiade," an epick poem, by Madame du Boccage:—"Madam, there is not any thing equal to your description of the sea round the North Pole, in your Ode on the Death of Captain Cook."

[I have thus quoted a compliment paid by Dr. Johnson to one of this lady's poetical pieces, and I have withheld his opinion of herself, thinking that she might not like it. I am afraid that it has reached her by some other means, and thus we may account for the various attacks made by her on her venerable towsnman since his decease; some avowed, and with her own name—others, I believe, in various forms and under several signatures. What are we to think of the scraps [5] of letters between her and Mr.

Gent. Mag. 1793, p. 1011.

[1] A friend of mine happening to be passing by a *field congregation* in the environs of London, when a methodist preacher quoted this passage with triumph.—BOSWELL.

[2] I trust that the City of London, not unhappily in unison with the court, will have the justice and generosity to obtain preferment for this reverend gentleman, now a worthy old servant of that magnificent corporation.—BOSWELL. [This wish was not accomplished. Mr. Vilette died in April, 1799, having been nearly thirty years chaplain of Newgate.—ED.]

[3] [The same whose correspondence has been lately published.—ED.]

[4] [No doubt Mr. Boswell's intentions were friendly, but he certainly had himself contributed by his indiscretions to keep alive the old animosity. —ED.]

[5] [A specimen of these scraps will amuse the reader, and more than justify Mr. Boswell's censure of Miss Seward.

"MISS SEWARD TO MR. HAYLEY.

"1782.

"You have seen Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets:' they have excited your generous indignation: a heart like Mr. Hayley's would shrink back astonished to perceive a mind so enriched with the power of genius, capable of such cool malignity. Yet the *Gentleman's Magazine* praised

Hayley, impotently attempting to undermine the noble pedestal on which public opinion has placed Dr. Johnson[1].]

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 26th June, 1784.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 373. "A message came to me yesterday to tell me that Macbean is dead, after three days of illness. He was one of those who, as Swift says, *stood as a screen between me and death* He has, I hope, made a good exchange. He was very pious; he was very innocent; he did no ill; and of doing good a continual tenour of distress allowed him few opportunities: he was very highly esteemed in the house[2]."]

On Sunday, June 27, I found him rather better. I mentioned to him a young man who was going to Jamaica with his wife and children, in expectation of being provided for by two of her brothers settled in that island, one a clergyman and the other a physician. JOHNSON. "It is a wild scheme, sir, unless he has a positive and deliberate invitation. There was a poor girl, who used to come about me, who had a cousin in Barbadoes, that, in a letter to her, expressed a wish she should come out to that island, and expatiated on the comforts and happiness of her situation. The poor girl went out: her cousin was much surprised, and asked her how she could think of coming. 'Because,' said she, 'you invited me.'—'Not I,' answered the cousin. The letter was then produced. 'I see it is true,' said she, 'that I did invite you: but I did not think you would come.' They lodged her in an out-house, where she passed her time miserably; and as soon as she had an opportunity she returned to England. Always tell this when you hear of people going abroad to relations upon a notion of being well received. In the case which you mention, it is probable the clergyman spends all he gets, and the physician does not know how much he is to get."

We this day dined at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with General Paoli, Lord Eliot (formerly Mr. Eliot, of Port Eliot), Dr. Beattie, and some other company. Talking of Lord Chesterfield:—JOHNSON. "His manner was exquisitely elegant, and he had more knowledge than I expected." BOSWELL. "Did you find, sir, his conversation to be of a superiour style?" JOHNSON. "Sir, in the conversation which I had with him I had the best right to superiority, for it was upon philology and literature." Lord Eliot, who had travelled at the same time with Mr. Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield's natural son, justly observed, that it was strange that a man who showed he had so much affection for his son as Lord Chesterfield did, by writing so many long and anxious letters to him, almost all of them when he was secretary of state, which certainly was a proof of great goodness of disposition, should endeavour to make his

these unworthy efforts to blight the laurels of undoubted fame. O that the venom may fall where it ought!—that the breath of public contempt may blow it from the beauteous wreaths," &c. &c. "I turn from this *comet* in literature (*Dr. Johnson*) to its SUN,—*Mr. Hayley!*"

"MR. HAYLEY TO MISS SEWARD.

"5th August.

"I have read the 'Lives of the Poets, with as much indignation as you can give me credit for—with a strange mixture of detestation and delight. As his language, to give the devil his due, is frequently sublime and enriched with certain diabolical graces of his own, I continue to listen to him, whenever he speaks, with an equal mixture of admiration and abhorrence."

Hayley seems to have been puzzled between his real admiration of Johnson and his wish to appear to share the indignation of his fair correspondent, who evidently did not like the expression of "*delight*" and "*admiration*" with which Hayley had qualified his assent. She therefore artfully enough seeks to enlist him more thoroughly in her cause by insinuating that Johnson, who was then at Lichfield, and whom, after Churchill, she calls "*Immane Pomposo*," had spoken coldly of Hayley's poetry, while she "*kept an indignant silence.*" This partly succeeds, and Hayley's reply is a little more satisfactory to the ireful lady.

"25th October.

"Your account of *Pomposo* delights me—that noble leviathan who lashes the troubled waters into a sublime but mischievous storm of turbulence and mud," &c.

But she was still dissatisfied:—"I am dubious," she says, "about the epithet *noble;*" and then she proceeds with a long see-saw *galimathias* of praise and dispraise of his charity and genius on the one hand, and of his acrimony, envy, malignity, bigotry, and superstition, on the other.

Miss Seward stated afterwards that this trash had been *published* without her consent; though she admitted having sent it to some of her distant friends, "*induced* by the wit and elegance of the *Haylean* passages." This latter motive the Editor is sorry to say he wholly disbelieves, for he finds that the *Haylean* passages are but *two*, and contain but *thirty-two lines* of the letter-press; while Miss Seward's own are *four* in number, and extend to a *hundred and ninety-one lines;* that the correspondence begins and ends with *her*, and clearly has no objects whatsoever but to exalt herself and depreciate Dr. Johnson. Mr. Hayley attempted to ridicule Johnson in the character of *Rumble* in one of his dull rhyming comedies, and in a Dialogue of the Dead, which was dead-born.—ED.]

[1] [This passage is an extract from Mr. Boswell's controversy with Miss Seward—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1793, p. 1011.—ED.]

[2] [The Charter-House, into which Johnson had procured his admission.—ED.]

son a rasca.. His lordship told us that Foote had intended to bring on the stage a father who had thus tutored his son, and to show the son an honest man to every one else, but practising his father's maxims upon him, and cheating him. JOHNSON. "I am much pleased with this design; but I think there was no occasion to make the son honest at all. No; he should be a consummate rogue: the contrast between honesty and knavery would be the stronger. It should be contrived so that the father should be the only sufferer by the son's villany, and thus there would be poetical justice."

Hawk. Apoph. 209 [Johnson said that he had once seen Mr. Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield's son, at Dodsley's shop, and was so much struck with his awkward manner and appearance, that he could not help asking Mr. Dodsley who he was.]

He put Lord Eliot in mind of Dr. Walter Harte[1]. "I know," said he, "Harte was your lordship's tutor, and he was also tutor to the Peterborough family. Pray, my lord, do you recollect any particulars that he told you of Lord Peterborough? He is a favourite of mine[2], and is not enough known; his character has been only ventilated in party pamphlets." Lord Eliot said, if Dr. Johnson would be so good as to ask him any questions, he would tell what he could recollect. Accordingly some things were mentioned. "But," said his lordship, "the best account of Lord Peterborough that I have happened to meet with is in 'Captain Carleton's Memoirs.' Carleton was descended of an ancestor[3] who had distinguished himself at the siege of Derry. He was an officer; and, what was rare at that time, had some knowledge of engineering." Johnson said, he had never heard of the book. Lord Eliot had it at Port Eliot; but, after a good deal of inquiry, procured a copy in London[4], and sent it to Johnson, who told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he was going to bed when it came, but was so much pleased with it, that he sat up till he had read it through, and found in it such an air of truth, that he could not doubt of its authenticity; adding, with a smile (in allusion to Lord Eliot's having recently been raised to the peerage), "I did not think a *young lord* could have mentioned to me a book in the English history that was not known to me."

An addition to our company came after we went up to the drawing-room; Dr. Johnson seemed to rise in spirits as his audience increased. He said, he wished Lord Orford's pictures[5] and Sir Ashton Lever's museum[6] might be purchased by the publick, because both the money, and the pictures, and the curiosities would remain in the country; whereas if they were sold into another kingdom, the nation would indeed get some money, but would lose the pictures and curiosities, which it would be desirable we should have for improvement in taste and natural history. The only question was, as the nation was much in want of money, whether it would not be better to take a large price from a foreign state?

He entered upon a curious discussion of the difference between intuition and sagacity; one being immediate in its effect, the other requiring a circuitous process; one, he observed, was the *eye* of the mind, the other the *nose* of the mind[7].

A young gentleman[8] present took up the argument against him, and maintained that no man ever thinks of the *nose of the mind*, not adverting that though that figurative sense seems strange to us, as very unusual, it is truly not more forced than Hamlet's "In my *mind's eye*, Horatio." He persisted much too long, and appeared to Johnson as putting himself forward as his antagonist with too much presumption: upon which he called to him in a loud tone, "What is it you are contending for, if you *be* contending?"—And afterwards imagining that the gentleman retorted upon him with a kind of smart drollery, he said, "Mr. *****, it does not become you to talk so to me. Besides, ridicule is not your talent; you have *there* neither intuition nor sagacity."—The gentleman protested that he had intended no improper freedom, but had the greatest respect for Dr. Johnson. After a short pause, during which we were somewhat uneasy;—JOHNSON. "Give me your hand, sir. You were too tedious, and I was too

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 168.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 273, his observation on Pope's *noble* friends.—ED.]

[3] [This is absurd—Carleton himself was in one of James's sea fights long prior to the siege of Derry.—ED.]

[4] [Carleton's very amusing *Memoirs* were republished in 1808, in an 8vo. volume.—ED.]

[5] [The fine Houghton collection, which was sold to the Empress of Russia.—ED.]

[6] [Sir Ashton Lever was knighted by George the Third. He died in 1788. His celebrated museum (valued before a committee of the house of commons at 53,000*l.*) was disposed of, in 1784, by a private lottery, to Mr. Parkinson, who removed it to Albion-place, Blackfriars-bridge, where it was for many years open as an exhibition. The several articles of which it was composed were afterwards sold separately by auction.—ED.]

[7] ['These illustrations were probably suggested by the radical meaning of the words, the first of which, in Latin, properly belongs to *sight*, and the latter to *smell*.—ED.]

[8] [The epithet "*young*" was added after the two first editions, and the ***** substituted instead of a dash ———, which lead to a suspicion that young Mr. Burke was meant.—ED.]

short ' Mr. *****. "Sir, I am honoured by your attention in any way." JOHNSON. "Come, sir, let 's have no more of it. We offended one another by our contention; let us not offend the company by our compliments."

He now said, he wished much to go to Italy, and that he dreaded passing the winter in England. I said nothing; but enjoyed a secret satisfaction in thinking that I had taken the most effectual measures to make such a scheme practicable.

On Monday, June 28, I had the honour to receive from the Lord Chancellor the following letter:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"SIR,—I should have answered your letter immediately, if (being much engaged when I received it) I had not put it in my pocket, and forgot to open it till this morning.

"I am much obliged to you for the suggestion; and I will adopt and press it as far as I can. The best argument, I am sure, and I hope it is not likely to fail, is Dr. Johnson's merit. But it will be necessary, if I should be so unfortunate as to miss seeing you, to converse with Sir Joshua on the sum it will be proper to ask,—in short, upon the means of setting him out. It would be a reflection on us all if such a man should perish for want of the means to take care of his health. Yours, &c.

"THURLOW."

This letter gave me very high satisfaction; I next day went and showed it to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was exceedingly pleased with it. He thought that I should now communicate the negotiation to Dr. Johnson, who might afterwards complain if the attention with which he had been honoured should be too long concealed from him. I intended to set out for Scotland next morning; but Sir Joshua cordially insisted that I should stay another day, that Johnson and I might dine with him, that we three might talk of his Italian tour, and, as Sir Joshua expressed himself, "have it all out." I hastened to Johnson, and was told by him that he was rather better today. BOSWELL. "I am very anxious about you, sir, and particularly that you should go to Italy for the winter, which I believe is your own wish." JOHNSON. "It is, sir." BOSWELL. "You have no objection, I presume, but the money it would require." JOHNSON. "Why, no, sir." Upon which I gave him a particular account of what had been done, and read to him the Lord Chancellor's letter. He listened with much attention; then warmly said, "This is taking prodigious pains about a man." "O, sir," said I, with most sincere affection, "your friends would d. every thing for you." He paused,—grew more and more agitated,—till tears started into his eyes, and he exclaimed with fervent emotion, "GOD bless you all!" I was so affected that I also shed tears. After a short silence, he renewed and extended his grateful benediction, "GOD bless you all, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake." We both remained for some time unable to speak. He rose suddenly and quitted the room, quite melted in tenderness. He staid but a short time, till he had recovered his firmness; soon after he returned I left him, having first engaged him to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's next day. I never was again under that roof which I had so long reverenced.

On Wednesday, June 30, the friendly confidential dinner with Sir Joshua Reynolds took place, no other company being present. Had I known that this was the last time that I should enjoy in this world the conversation of a friend whom I so much respected, and from whom I derived so much instruction and entertainment, I should have been deeply affected. When I now look back to it, I am vexed that a single word should have been forgotten.

Both Sir Joshua and I were so sanguine in our expectations, that we expatiated with confidence on the liberal provision which we were sure would be made for him, conjecturing whether munificence would be displayed in one large donation, or in an ample increase of his pension. He himself catched so much of our enthusiasm as to allow himself to suppose it not impossible that our hopes might in one way or other be realized. He said that he would rather have his pension doubled than a grant of a thousand pounds; "For," said he, "though probably I may not live to receive as much as a thousand pounds, a man would have the consciousness that he should pass the remainder of his life in splendour, how long soever it might be." Considering what a moderate proportion an income of six hundred pounds a-year bears to innumerable fortunes in this country, it is worthy of remark, that a man so truly great should think it splendour.

As an instance of extraordinary liberality of friendship, he told us that Dr. Brocklesby had upon this occasion offered him a hundred a-year for his life[1]. A grateful tear

[1] [It should be recollected that the amiable and accomplished man who made this generous offer to the *tory* champion was a keen *whig;* and it is stated in the *Biographical Dictionary,* that he pressed Johnson in his last illness to remove to his house for the more immediate convenience of medical advice. Dr. Brocklesby died in 1797, æt. 76. He was a very intimate friend

started into his eye, as he spoke this in a faltering tone.

Sir Joshua and I endeavoured to flatter his imagination with agreeable prospects of happiness in Italy. "Nay," said he, "I must not expect much of that; when a man goes to Italy merely to feel how he breathes the air, he can enjoy very little."

Our conversation turned upon living in the country, which Johnson, whose melancholy mind required the dissipation of quick successive variety, had habituated himself to consider as a kind of mental imprisonment. "Yet, sir," said I, "there are many people who are content to live in the country." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is in the intellectual world as in the physical world: we are told by natural philosophers that a body is at rest in the place that is fit for it; they who are content to live in the country are *fit* for the country."

Talking of various enjoyments, I argued that a refinement of taste was a disadvantage, as they who have attained to it must be seldomer pleased than those who have no nice discrimination, and are therefore satisfied with every thing that comes in their way. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, that is a paltry notion. Endeavour to be as perfect as you can in every respect."

I accompanied him in Sir Joshua Reynolds's coach to the entry of Bolt-court. He asked me whether I would not go with him to his house; I declined it, from an apprehension that my spirits would sink. We bade adieu to each other affectionately in the carriage. When he had got down upon the foot-pavement, he called out, "Fare you well!" and, without looking back, sprang away with a kind of pathetick briskness, if I may use that expression, which seemed to indicate a struggle to conceal uneasiness, and impressed me with a foreboding of our long, long separation.

I remained one day more in town, to have the chance of talking over my negotiation with the Lord Chancellor; but the multiplicity of his lordship's important engagements did not allow of it; so I left the management of the business in the hands of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Soon after this time Dr. Johnson had the mortification of being informed by Mrs. Thrale, that "what she supposed he never believed" was true; namely, that she was actually going to marry Signor Piozzi, an Italian musick-master.

["MRS. PIOZZI[1] TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Bath, 30th June, [1784.]

"MY DEAR SIR,—The enclosed is a circular letter, which I have sent to all the guardians; but our friendship demands somewhat more: it requires that I should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connexion which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never believed. Indeed, my dear sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pains. I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell it you now because all is irrevocably settled, and out of your power to prevent. I will say, however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though, perhaps, I am become by many privations the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent's consent till you write kindly to your faithful servant,

"H. L. P."] Letters, vol. ii. p. 375.

He endeavoured to prevent it; but in vain [The following is the only letter of Dr. Johnson on this subject which she has published:— Ed

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. PIOZZI.

"London, July 8th, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me: I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere. Letters, vol. ii. p. 376.

"I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever

of the celebrated Charles Townshend, as well as of Mr. Burke to whom he had bequeathed 1000*l.* in his will; but recollecting that he might outlive his friend, or that the legacy might fall when Mr. Burke did not want it, he requested him to accept it from his living hand, "*ut pignus amicitiæ.*" Doctor Brocklesby's name was the subject of one of Mr. Burke's playful puns. There was, cotemporary with him, in London, a low quack who called himself *Doctor Rock.* One day Mr. Burke called Brocklesby *Doctor Rock*, and on his taking some offence at this disreputable appellation, Burke undertook to prove *algebraically* that Rock was his proper name, thus, '*Brock* — *b* = *Rock*," or "Brock *less* b, makes Rock." Q. E. D.—Ed.]

[1] [In the lady's own publication of the correspondence, this letter is given as from Mrs. *Piozzi*, and is signed with the initial of her new name; Dr. Johnson's answer is also addressed to Mrs. *Piozzi*, and both the letters allude to the matter as *done;* yet it appears by the periodical publications of the day that the marriage did not take place until the 25*th July.* The Editor knows not how to account for this but by supposing that Mrs. Piozzi, to avoid Johnson's importunities, had stated that as done which was only *settled to be done.* Any reader who is curious about this miserable *mésalliance* will find it most acrimoniously discussed in Baretti's *Strictures* in the European Magazine for 1788.—Ed.]

I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

"Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon M. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security: your rank will be higher and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy

"I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain; yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

"When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrew's attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The queen went forward. If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther. The tears stand in my eyes.

"I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Any letters that come for me hither will be sent me."]

If she would publish the whole of the correspondence that passed between Dr. Johnson and her on the subject, we should have a full view of his real sentiments. As it is, our judgment must be biassed by that characteristick specimen which Sir John Hawkins has given us [in the following passage [1].]

Hawk. p. 567. [About the middle of 1784, he was, to appearance, so well, that both himself and his friends hoped that he had some years to live. He had recovered from the paralytic stroke of the last year to such a degree, that, saving a little difficulty in his articulation, he had no remains of it: he had also undergone a slight fit of the gout, and conquered an oppression on his lungs, so as to be able, as himself told me, to run up the whole staircase of the Royal Academy, on the day of the annual dinner there. In short, to such a degree of health was he restored, that he forgot all his complaints: he resumed sitting to Opie for his picture, which had been begun the year before, but, I believe, was never finished, and accepted an invitation to the house of a friend at Ashbourne in Derbyshire, proposing to stay there till towards the end of the summer, and, in his return, to visit Mrs. Porter, his daughter-in-law, and others of his friends, at Lichfield.

A few weeks before his setting out, he was made uneasy by a report that the widow of his friend Mr. Thrale was about to dispose of herself in marriage to a foreigner, a singer by profession, and with him to quit the kingdom. Upon this occasion he took the alarm, and to prevent a degradation of herself, and, what as executor of her husband was more his concern, the desertion of her children, wrote to her, she then being at Bath, a letter, of which the following spurious copy was inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1784:—

"MADAM,—If you are already ignominiously married, you are lost beyond redemption;—if you are not, permit me one hour's conversation, to convince you that such a marriage must not take place. If, after a whole hour's reasoning, you should not be convinced, you will still be at liberty to act as you think proper. I have been extremely ill, and am still ill; but if you grant me the audience I ask, I will instantly take a post-chaise and attend you at Bath. Pray do not refuse this favour to a man who hath so many years loved and honoured you."

That this letter is spurious, as to the language, I have Johnson's own authority for saying; but, in respect of the sentiments, he avowed it, in a declaration to me, that not a sentence of it was his, but yet that it was an *adumbration* of one that he wrote upon the occasion. It may therefore be suspected, that some one who had heard him repeat the contents of the letter had given it to the public in the form in which it appeared.

What answer was returned to his friendly monition I know not, but it seems that it was succeeded by a letter [2] of greater length,

[1] [Here Mr. Boswell had inserted a few lines of the passage, which the Editor thinks right to give in full.—ED.]

[2] [It appears as if Sir J. Hawkins, who had not had the advantage of seeing the correspondence published by Mrs. Piozzi, had made some confusion about these letters. It seems clear that the *first* of the series must have been, not Johnson's remonstrance, but *hers*, (*ante*, p. 406, dated *Bath*, 30*th June*. To that Johnson probably replied by the letter, the contents of which are *adumbrated* in that of the "*Gentleman's Magazine*." To this she probably rejoined by the letter which Sir J. Hawkins says that he saw, to which Johnson's of the 8th July, given above, may have been the reply. Sir J. Hawkins thinks that there were *three* letters from Dr. Johnson, whereas it seems probable that there were but *two* of which one only is preserved.—ED.]

written, as it afterwards appeared, too late to do any good, in which he expressed an opinion, that the person to whom it was addressed had forfeited her fame. The answer to this I have seen: it is written from Bath, and contains an indignant vindication as well of her conduct as her fame, an inhibition of Johnson from following her to Bath, and a farewell, concluding—"Till you have changed your opinion of [Piozzi] let us converse no more."

From the style of the letter, a conclusion was to be drawn that baffled all the powers of reasoning and persuasion:

"One argument she summ'd up all in,
The thing was done, and past recalling[1];"

which being the case, he contented himself with reflecting on what he had done to prevent that which he thought one of the greatest evils that could befal the progeny of his friend, the alienation of the affections of their mother. He looked upon the desertion of children by their parents, and the withdrawing from them that protection, that mental nutriment, which, in their youth, they are capable of receiving, the exposing them to the snares and temptations of the world, and the solicitations and deceits of the artful and designing, as most unnatural; and in a letter on the subject to me, written from Ashbourne, thus delivered his sentiments:

"Poor Thrale! I thought that either her virtue or her vice," (meaning, as I understood, by the former, the love of her children, and by the latter her pride) "would have restrained her from such a marriage. She is now become a subject for her enemies to exult over, and for her friends, if she has any left, to forget or pity."]

It must be admitted that Johnson derived a considerable portion of happiness from the comforts and elegancies which he enjoyed in Mr. Thrale's family; but Mrs. Thrale assures us he was indebted for these to her husband alone, who certainly respected him sincerely. Her words are, "*Veneration for his virtue, reverence for his talents,* delight *in his conversation, and* habitual endurance of a yoke my husband first put upon me, *and of which he contentedly bore his share for sixteen or seventeen years, made me go on so long with* Mr. Johnson; *but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been* terrifying *in the first years of our friendship, and* irksome *in the last; nor could I pretend to* support *it without help, when my coadjutor was no more.*" Alas! how different is this from the declarations which I have heard Mrs. Thrale make in his lifetime, without a single murmur against any peculiarities, or against any one circumstance which attended their intimacy!

As a sincere friend of the great man whose life I am writing, I think it necessary to guard my readers against the mistaken notion of Dr. Johnson's character, which this lady's "Anecdotes" of him suggest; for from the very nature and form of her book, "it lends deception lighter wings to fly."

"Let it be remembered," says an eminent critick[2], "that she has comprised in a small volume all that she could recollect of Dr. Johnson in *twenty years*, during which period, doubtless, some severe things were said by him; and they who read the book in *two hours* naturally enough suppose that his whole conversation was of this complexion. But the fact is, I have been often in his company, and never *once* heard him say a severe thing to any one; and many others can attest the same. When he did say a severe thing, it was generally extorted by ignorance pretending to knowledge, or by extreme vanity or affectation.

"Two instances of inaccuracy," adds he, "are peculiarly worthy of notice:

"It is said, '*that natural roughness of his manner so often mentioned would, notwithstanding the regularity of his notions, burst through them all from time to time; and he once bade a very celebrated lady, who praised him with too much zeal perhaps, or perhaps too strong an emphasis (which always offended him), consider what her flattery was worth before she choked him with it.*' Piozzi, Anec. p. 183.

"Now let the genuine anecdote be contrasted with this.—The person thus represented as being harshly treated, though a very celebrated lady, was *then* just come to London from an obscure situation in the country. At Sir Joshua Reynolds's one evening, she met Dr. Johnson. She very soon began to pay her court to him in the most fulsome strain. 'Spare me, I beseech you, dear madam,' was his reply. She still *laid it on.* 'Pray, madam, let us have no more of this,' he rejoined. Not paying any attention to these warnings, she continued still her eulogy. At length, provoked by this indelicate and *vain* obtrusion of

[1] Pope and Swift's Miscellanies, "Phyllis, or the Progress of Love."—Boswell.

[2] Who has been pleased to furnish me with his remarks.—Boswell. [This "critic" is no doubt Mr. Malone, whose MS. notes on Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes" contains the *germs* of these criticisms. Several of his similar animadversions have been already quoted, with the editor's reasons for differing essentially from Mr. Boswell and Mr. Malone in their estimate of Mrs. Piozzi's work. See *ante*, pp. 142, 258, 260, 261, *n.* Mr. Malone's notes were communicated to me by Mr. Markland, who purchased the volume at the sale of the library of the late James Boswell junior, in 1825.—Ed.]

compliments, he exclaimed, 'Dearest lady, consider with yourself what your flattery is worth, before you bestow it so freely.'

"How different does this story appear[1], when accompanied with all those circumstances which really belong to it, but which Mrs. Thrale either did not know, or has suppressed!

"She says, in another place, '*One gentleman, however, who dined at a nobleman's house in his company, and that of* Mr. Thrale, *to whom I was obliged for the anecdote, was willing to enter the lists in defence of* King William's *character; and having opposed and contradicted* Johnson *two or three times, petulantly enough, the master of the house began to feel uneasy, and expect disagreeable consequences; to avoid which he said, loud enough for the Doctor to hear, 'Our friend here has no meaning now in all this, except just to relate at club to-morrow how he teased* John son *at dinner to-day; this is all to do himself* honour.'—'*No, upon my word,' replied the other, 'I see no* honour *in it, whatever you may do.*'—'*Well, sir,' returned* Mr. Johnson, *sternly, 'if you do not see the honour, I am sure I* feel *the disgrace.*'

"This is all sophisticated. Mr. Thrale was *not* in the company, though he might have related the story to Mrs. Thrale. A friend, from whom I had the story, was present; and it was *not* at the house of a nobleman. On the observation being made by the master of the house on a gentleman's contradicting Johnson, that he had talked for the honour, &c. the gentleman muttered in a low voice, 'I see no honour in it;' and Dr. Johnson said nothing: so all the rest (though *bien trouvée*) is mere garnish[2]."

I have had occasion several times, in the course of this work, to point out the incorrectness of Mrs. Thrale as to particulars which consisted with my own knowledge. But indeed she has, in flippant terms enough, expressed her disapprobation of that anxious desire of authenticity which prompts a person who is to record conversations to write them down *at the moment.* Unquestionably, if they are to be recorded at all, the sooner it is done the better. This lady herself says, "*To recollect, however, and to repeat the sayings of* Dr Johnson, *is almost all that can be done by the writers of his Life; as his life, at least since my acquaintance with him, consisted in little else than talking, when he was not employed in some serious piece of work.*" She boasts of her having kept a commonplace book; and we find she noted, at one time or other, in a very lively manner, specimens of the conversation of Dr. Johnson, and of those who talked with him: but had she done it recently, they probably would have been less erroneous, and we should have been relieved from those disagreeable doubts of their authenticity with which we must now pursue them.

She says of him, "*He was the most charitable of mortals, without being what we call an* active friend. *Admirable at giving counsel; no man saw his way so clearly; but he* would not stir a finger *for the assistance of those to whom he was willing enough to give advice*[3]." And again, on the same page, "*If you wanted a* slight favour, *you must apply to people of other dispositions; for* not a step would Johnson move *to obtain a man a vote in a society, to repay a compliment which might be useful or pleasing, to write a letter of request, &c., or to obtain a hundred pounds a year more for a friend who perhaps had already two or three. No force could urge him to diligence, no importunity could conquer his resolution to stand still.*"

It is amazing that one who had such opportunities of knowing Dr. Johnson should appear so little acquainted with his real character. I am sorry this lady does not advert, that she herself contradicts[4] the assertion of his being obstinately defective in the *petites morales*, in the little endearing charities of social life, in conferring smaller favours; for she says, "Dr. Johnson *was liberal enough in granting literary assistance to others, I think; and innumerable are*

[1] [The "critic" does not give any authority for *his* statement of the story; and when he himself applies the terms "*fulsome, vain, indelicate,* and *obtrusive*" to the lady's conduct, there seems no great reason (knowing, as we do, what things Johnson *did* on any slight provocation say even to ladies) to prefer Mr. Malone's version to Mrs. Piozzi's. See also *ante*, p. 169, in which it will be seen that both Boswell and Malone were well aware how much Johnson was displeased at Miss More's flattery.—Ed.]

[2] [Upon this anecdote it is to be observed, that, again, as the "critic" does not mention *his* authority, so we should rather believe Mrs. Piozzi, who does give *hers;* and as she certainly had the substance of the story right, she is just as likely to have been accurate in the details as Mr. Malone, who had it, like herself, a second hand.—Ed.]

[3] *Ante*, p. 265.

[4] [Mrs. Piozzi may have been right or wrong as to the *degree* in which Dr. Johnson's indolence operated on those occasions; but at least she was sincere, for she did not conceal *from Johnson himself* that she thought him negligent in doing small favours: and Mr. Boswell's own work affords several instances in which Johnson exhibits and avows the contradictions in his character which are here imputed to Mrs. Piozzi as total misrepresentations. The truth seems to be that to all the little idle matters about which Mrs. Piozzi teased him, probably too often, he *was* very indifferent and she describes him as she found him.—Ed.]

the prefaces, sermons, lectures, and dedications which he used to make for people who begged of him." I am certain that a *more active friend* has rarely been found in any age This work, which I fondly hope will rescue his memory from obloquy, contains a thousand instances of his benevolent exertions in almost every way that can be conceived; and particularly in employing his pen with a generous readiness for those to whom its aid could be useful. Indeed his obliging activity in doing little offices of kindness, both by letters and personal application, was one of the most remarkable features in his character; and for the truth of this I can appeal to a number of his respectable friends: Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Mr. Malone, the Bishop of Dromore, Sir William Scott, Sir Robert Chambers. And can Mrs. Thrale forget the advertisements which he wrote for her husband at the time of his election contest; the epitaphs on him and her mother; the playful and even trifling verses for the amusement of her and her daughters; his corresponding with her children, and entering into their minute concerns, which shows him in the most amiable light?

She relates, that Mr. Cholmondeley[1] unexpectedly rode up to Mr. Thrale's carriage, in which Mr. Thrale, and she, and Dr. Johnson were travelling; that he paid them all his proper compliments, but observing that Dr. Johnson, who was reading, did not see him, "*tapped him gently on the shoulder.* '*'Tis* Mr. Cholmondeley,' *says my husband.* '*Well, sir—and what if it is* Mr. Cholmondeley?' *says the other, sternly, just lifting his eyes a moment from his book, and returning to it again with renewed avidity.*" This surely conveys a notion of Johnson, as if he had been grossly rude to Mr. Cholmondeley, a gentleman whom he always loved and esteemed. If, therefore, there was an absolute necessity for mentioning the story at all, it might have been thought that her tenderness for Dr. Johnson's character would have disposed her to state any thing that could soften it. Why then is there a total silence as to what Mr. Cholmondeley told her?—that Johnson, who had known him from his earliest years, having been made sensible of what had doubtless a strange appearance, took occasion, when he afterwards met him, to make a very courteous and kind apology There is another little circumstance which I cannot but remark. Her book was published in 1785; she had then in her possession a letter from Dr. Johnson, dated in 1777, which begins thus: "Cholmondeley's story shocks me, if it be true, which I can hardly think, for I am utterly unconscious of it: I am very sorry, and very much ashamed." Why then publish the anecdote? Or if she did, why not add the circumstances, with which she was well acquainted[2]? Letters, vol. ii. p. 12.

In his social intercourse she thus describes him: "*Ever musing till he was called out to converse, and conversing till the fatigue of his friends, or the promptitude of his own temper to take offence, consigned him back again to silent meditation.*" Yet in the same book she tells us, "*He was, however, seldom inclined to be silent when any moral or literary question was started; and it was on such occasions that, like the sage in* 'Rasselas,' *he spoke, and attention watched his lips; he reasoned, and conviction closed his periods.*" His conversation, indeed, was so far from ever *fatiguing* his friends[3], that they regretted when it was interrupted or ceased, and could exclaim in Milton's language, Piozzi Anec. p. 23.

"With thee conversing, I forget all time."

I certainly, then, do not claim too much in behalf of my illustrious friend in saying, that however smart and entertaining Mrs. Thrale's "Anecdotes" are, they must not be held as good evidence against him; for wherever an instance of harshness and severity is told, I beg leave to doubt its perfect authenticity; for though there may have been *some* foundation for it, yet,

[1] George James Cholmondeley, Esq., grandson of George, third Earl of Cholmondeley, and one of the commissioners of excise; a gentleman respected for his abilities and elegance of manners. —Boswell. [He died in Feb. 1831, æt. 79, as this sheet was passing through the press. It is odd that the Editor should have had the same remark to make as to Mr. Chamberlain Clark and Mr. Joddrel so nearly at the same time: *ante*, p. 366 and 376.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 187. Let it be observed that here is no charge of falsehood or inaccuracy; the story is admitted to be true, but Mr. Boswell asks, "why did she not relate the apology which Johnson made to Mr. Cholmondeley?" It does not appear that she knew it: and finally Mr. Boswell inquires, "why publish so unfavourable an anecdote?" Why, it may be asked in return, has Mr. Boswell published fifty as unfavourable?—Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Boswell himself tells us that Johnson kept such late hours that he would frequently outsit all his company. Surely Mrs. Piozzi was justified in saying, in a colloquial style, that such a conversation had ended from "the fatigue of his friends." *Ante*, p. 133. There can be no doubt that after her deplorable marriage she lost much of her reverence and regard for Dr. Johnson, and many of her observations and expressions are tinged with vexation and anger; but they do not, in the Editor's opinion, ever amount to any thing like a falsification of facts.—Ed.]

like that of his reproof to the "very celebrated lady," it may be so exhibited in the narration as to be very unlike the real fact.

The evident tendency of the following anecdote is to represent Dr. Johnson as extremely deficient in affection, tenderness, or even common civility. "*When I one day lamented the loss of a first cousin killed in* America,—'*Prithee, my dear (said he), have done with canting; how would the world be the worse for it, I may ask, if all your relations were at once spitted like larks, and roasted for* Presto's *supper?*'—Presto *was the dog that lay under the table while we talked.*" I suspect this too of exaggeration and distortion. I allow that he made her an angry speech; but let the circumstances fairly appear, as told by Mr. Baretti, who was present[1]:

"Mrs. Thrale, while supping very heartily upon larks, laid down her knife and fork, and abruptly exclaimed, 'O, my dear Johnson, do you know what has happened? The last letters from abroad have brought us an account that our poor cousin's head was taken off by a cannon-ball.' Johnson, who was shocked both at the fact and her light unfeeling manner of mentioning it, replied, 'Madam, it would give *you* very little concern if all your relations were spitted like those larks, and dressed for Presto's supper[2].'"

It is with concern that I find myself obliged to animadvert on the inaccuracies of Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes," and perhaps I may be thought to have dwelt too long upon her little collection. But as from Johnson's long residence under Mr. Thrale's roof, and his intimacy with her, the account which she has given of him may have made an unfavourable and unjust impression, my duty, as a faithful biographer, has obliged me reluctantly to perform this unpleasing task[3].

Having left the *pious negotiation*, as I called it, in the best hands, I shall here insert what relates to it. Johnson wrote to Sir Joshua Reynolds on July 6, as follows: "I am going, I hope, in a few days, to try the air of Derbyshire, but hope to see you before I go. Let me, however, mention to you what I have much at heart. If the chancellor should continue his attention to Mr. Boswell's request, and confer with you on the means of relieving my languid state, I am very desirous to avoid the appearance of asking money upon false pretences. I desire you to represent to his lordship, what, as soon as it is suggested, he will perceive to be reasonable,—that, if I grow much worse, I shall be afraid to leave my physicians, to suffer the inconveniences of travel, and pine in the solitude of a foreign country;—that, if I grow much better, of which indeed there is now little appearance, I shall not wish to leave my friends and my domestick comforts, for I do not travel for pleasure or curiosity; yet if I should recover, curiosity would revive. In my present state I am desirous to make a struggle for a little longer life, and hope to obtain some help from a softer climate. Do for me what you can." He wrote to me July 26: "I wish your affairs could have permitted a longer and continued exertion of your zeal and kindness. They that have your kindness may want your ardour. In the mean time I am very feeble and very dejected."

By a letter from Sir Joshua Reynolds I was informed, that the lord chancellor had called on him, and acquainted him that the application had not been successful; but that his lordship, after speaking highly in praise of Johnson, as a man who was an honour to his country, desired Sir Joshua to let him know, that on granting a mortgage of his pension[4], he should draw on his

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[1] [It must be recollected that Baretti's evidence is, in this case, worse than nothing, he having become a most brutal libeller of Mrs. Piozzi; but even if his version were the true one, Mr. Boswell should have seen that it made Dr. Johnson's illustration much more personally and pointedly offensive than as told by Mrs. Piozzi.—Ed.]

[2] Upon mentioning this to my friend Mr. Wilkes, he, with his usual readiness, pleasantly matched it with the following *sentimental anecdote*. He was invited by a young man of fashion at Paris to sup with him and a lady, who had been for some time his mistress, but with whom he was going to part. He said to Mr. Wilkes that he really felt very much for her, she was in such distress, and that he meant to make her a present of two hundred louis-d'ors. Mr. Wilkes observed the behaviour of mademoiselle, who sighed, indeed, very piteously, and assumed every pathetick air of grief, but ate no less than three French pigeons, which are as large as English partridges, besides other things. Mr. Wilkes whispered the gentleman, "We often say in England, *excessive sorrow is exceeding dry*, but I never heard *excessive sorrow is exceeding hungry*. Perhaps *one* hundred will do" The gentleman took the hint.—Boswell.

[3] [The Editor's duty has obliged *him* to endeavour to remove the "unjust and unfavourable impressions" which Mr. Boswell has given of Mrs. Piozzi; but he is too well aware of the inevitable inaccuracy of all anecdotes—nay, even of those like Mr. Boswell's own, written down after short intervals—to give implicit confidence to Mrs. Piozzi's recollection; the chief claim of her Anecdotes to credit is, that they are confirmed in may instances by Dr. Johnson's correspondence, and in many more by Mr. Boswell's own work.—Ed.]

[4] [This offer has in the first view of it the appearance rather of a commercial than a gratuitous transaction; but Sir Joshua clearly understood at the making it that Lord Thurlow designedly put it in that form. He was fearful that Johnson's

lordship to the amount of five or six hundred pounds, and that his lordship explained the meaning of the mortgage to be, that he wished the business to be conducted in such a manner, that Dr. Johnson should appear to be under the least possible obligation. Sir Joshua mentioned that he had by the same post communicated all this to Dr. Johnson.

How Johnson was affected upon the occasion will appear from what he wrote to Sir Joshua Reynolds:

"Ashbourne, 9th September.

"Many words I hope are not necessary between you and me, to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the chancellor's liberality, and your kind offices.

* * * * * *

"I have enclosed a letter to the chancellor, which, when you have read it, you will be pleased to seal with a head, or any other general seal, and convey it to him: had I sent it directly to him, I should have seemed to overlook the favour of your intervention."

'TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR[1].

"September, 1784.

"My lord,—After a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive, if my condition made it necessary; for, to such a mind, who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians; and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told of it by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better, I should not be willing, if much worse, not able, to migrate. Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but, when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and, from your lordship's kindness, I have received a benefit, which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit. I am, my lord, your lordship's most obliged, most grateful, and most humble servant,

"Sam. Johnson."

[An incorrect copy of the above letter, though of a private nature, found its way into the publick papers in this manner. It was given to Sir Joshua Reynolds, unsealed, to be delivered to Lord Thurlow. Sir Joshua, looking upon it as a handsome testimony of gratitude, and as it related to a transaction in which he had concerned himself, took a copy of it, and showed it to a few of his friends. Among these was a lady of quality, who, having heard it read, the next day desired to be gratified with the perusal of it at home: the use she made of this favour was, the copying and sending it to one of the newspapers, whence it was taken and inserted in others, as also in the *Gentleman's* and many other *magazines*. Johnson, upon being told that it was in print, exclaimed in my hearing—"I am betrayed;" but soon after forgot, as he was ever ready to do all real or supposed injuries, the error that made the publication possible.] Hawk. p. 572, 573.

Upon this unexpected failure I abstain from presuming to make any remarks, or to offer any conjectures[2].

[This affair soon became a topic of conversation, and it was stated that the cause of the failure was *the refusal of the king himself;* but from the following letter it appears that the *matter was never mentioned to his majesty;* that, as time pressed, his lordship proposed the beforementioned arrangement as from himself, running the risk of obtaining the king's subsequent approbation when he should have an opportunity of mentioning it to his majesty. This affords some, and yet not a satisfactory, Ed.

high spirit would induce him to reject it as a donation, but thought that in the way of loan it might be accepted.—*Hawkins's Life*, p. 572.—Ed.]

[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds, on account of the excellence both of the sentiment and expression of this letter, took a copy of it, which he showed to some of his friends: one of whom [*Lady Lucan, it is said*], who admired it, being allowed to peruse it leisurely at home, a copy was made, and found its way into the newspapers and magazines. It was transcribed with some inaccuracies. I print it from the original draft in Johnson's own handwriting.—Boswell.

[2] [It is rather singular that Mr. Boswell, who was so angry that Sir J. Hawkins did not inquire from Sir Joshua about the *beginning* of this negotiation, should himself have been so much more negligent as not to inquire about its *end*. If he had done so, Sir Joshua would no doubt have communicated to him Lord Thurlow's letter of the 18th Nov., and thus saved Mr. Boswell the pain which it is clear he felt at supposing that the *king himself* had rejected his lordship's humane proposition. It seems somewhat odd that Sir Joshua, after the appearance of the above passage in Mr. Boswell's first edition, did not explain the true state of the case to him. See the following note.—Ed.]

explanation of the device suggested by Lord Thurlow of Johnson's giving him a *mortgage on his pension.*]

[" LORD THURLOW TO SIR J. REYNOLDS.
" Thursday, 18th November, 1784.

" DEAR SIR,—My choice, if that had been left me, would certainly have been that the matter should not have been talked of at all. The only object I regarded was my own pleasure, in contributing to the health and comfort of a man whom I venerate sincerely and highly for every part, without exception, of his exalted character. This you know I proposed to do, as it might be without any expense, in all events at a rate infinitely below the satisfaction I proposed to myself. It would have suited the purpose better if nobody had heard of it, except Dr. Johnson, you, and J. Boswell [1]. *But the chief objection to the rumour is that his majesty is supposed to have refused it.* Had that been so, I should not have communicated the circumstance. It was impossible for me to take the king's pleasure on the suggestion I presumed to move. I am an untoward solicitor. The time seemed to press, and I chose rather to take on myself the risk of his majesty's concurrence than delay a journey which might conduce to Dr. Johnson's health and comfort.

" But these are all trifles, and scarce deserve even this cursory explanation. The only question of any worth is whether Dr. Johnson has any wish to go abroad, or other occasion for my assistance. Indeed he should give me credit for perfect simplicity, when I treat this as merely a pleasure afforded me, and accept it accordingly: any reluctance, if he examines himself thoroughly, will certainly be found to rest, in some part or other, upon a doubt of the disposition with which I offer it. I am, dear sir, with great regard, your most faithful and obedient servant, " THURLOW."]

Reyn. MSS.

Having, after repeated reasonings, brought Dr. Johnson to agree to my removing to London, and even to furnish me with arguments in favour of what he had opposed; I wrote to him, requesting he would write them for me; he was so good as to comply, and I shall extract that part of his letter to me of June 11, as a proof how well he could exhibit a cautious yet encouraging view of it:

" I remember, and entreat you to remember, that *virtus est vitium fugere;* the first approach to riches is security from poverty The condition upon which you have my consent to settle in London is, that your expense never exceeds your annual income. Fixing this basis of security, you cannot be hurt, and you may be very much advanced. The loss of your Scottish business, which is all that you can lose, is not to be reckoned as any equivalent to the hopes and possibilities that open here upon you. If you succeed, the question of prudence is at an end; every body will think that done right which ends happily; and though your expectations, of which I would not advise you to talk too much, should not be totally answered, you can hardly fail to get friends who will do for you all that your present situation allows you to hope; and if, after a few years, you should return to Scotland, you will return with a mind supplied by various conversation, and many opportunities of inquiry, with much knowledge, and materials for reflection and instruction."

[" DR. JOHNSON TO DR. ADAMS.
" London, 11th June (July), 1784.

" DEAR SIR,—I am going into Staffordshire and Derbyshire in quest of some relief, of which my need is not less than when I was treated at your house with so much tenderness.

Pemb MSS

" I have now received the Collations for Xenophon, which I have sent you with the letters that relate to them. I cannot at present take any part in the work, but I would rather pay for a Collation of Oppian than see it neglected; for the Frenchmen act with great liberality. Let us not fall below them.

" I know not in what state Dr. Edwards left his book [2]. Some of his emendations seemed to me to (be) irrefragably certain, and such, therefore, as ought not to be lost. His rule was not (to) change the text; and, therefore, I suppose he has left notes to be subjoined. As the book is posthumous, some account of the editor ought to be given.

" You have now the whole process of the correspondence before you. When the Prior is answered, let some apology be made for me.

" I was forced to divide the Collation, but as it is paged you will easily put every part in its proper place.

" Be pleased to convey my respects to Mrs. and Miss Adams. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

" SAM. JOHNSON."]

[1] [That this letter was designedly kept from Mr. Boswell's knowledge is rendered probable by the following curious circumstance. On the face of the original letter *his name* has been obliterated with so much care that but for the different colour of the ink and some other small circumstances, it would not have been discoverable; it is artfully done, and the sentence appears to run " *except Dr. Johnson, you, and I*" —" *Boswell* " being erased —ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 200.—ED.]

Let us now contemplate Johnson thirty years after the death of his wife, still retaining for her all the tenderness of affection[1].

"TO THE REVEREND MR. BAGSHAW, AT BROMLEY[2].

"12th July, 1784.

"SIR,—Perhaps you may remember, that in the year 1753 you committed to the ground my dear wife. I now entreat your permission to lay a stone upon her; and have sent the inscription, that, if you find it proper, you may signify your allowance.

"You will do me a great favour by showing the place where she lies, that the stone may protect her remains.

"Mr. Ryland will wait on you for the inscription[3], and procure it to be engraved. You will easily believe that I shrink from this mournful office. When it is done, if I have strength remaining, I will visit Bromley once again, and pay you part of the respect to which you have a right from, reverend sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On the same day he wrote to Mr. Langton:

"I cannot but think that in my languid and anxious state, I have some reason to complain that I receive from you neither inquiry nor consolation. You know how much I value your friendship, and with what confidence I expect your kindness, if I wanted any act of tenderness that you could perform; at least if you do not know it, I think your ignorance is your own fault. Yet how long is it that I have lived almost in your neighbourhood without the least notice?—I do not, however, consider this neglect as particularly shown to me; I hear two of your most valuable friends make the same complaint. But why are all thus overlooked? You are not oppressed by sickness, you are not distracted by business; if you are sick, you are sick of leisure:—And allow yourself to be told, that no disease is more to be dreaded or avoided. Rather to do nothing than to do good, is the lowest state of a degraded mind. Boileau says to his pupil,

'Que les vers ne soient pas votre eternel emploi,
'Cultivez vos amis.'——

That voluntary debility which modern language is content to term indolence will, if it is not counteracted by resolution, render in time the strongest faculties lifeless, and turn the flame to the smoke of virtue.—I do not expect or desire to see you, because I am much pleased to find that your mother stays so long with you, and I should think you neither elegant nor grateful, if you did not study her gratification. You will pay my respects to both the ladies, and to all the young people.—I am going northward for a while, to try what help the country can give me; but if you will write, the letter will come after me."

Next day he set out on a jaunt to Staffordshire and Derbyshire, flattering himself that he might be in some degree relieved.

During his absence from London he kept up a correspondence with several of his friends, from which I shall select what appears to me proper for publication, without attending nicely to chronological order.

"DR. JOHNSON TO DR. BROCKLESBY.

"Ashbourne, 20th July.

"The kind attention which you have so long shown to my health and happiness makes it as much a debt of gratitude as a call of interest to give you an account of what befalls me, when accident removes[4] me from your immediate care. The journey of the first day was performed with very little sense of fatigue; the second day brought me to Lichfield without much lassitude; but I am afraid that I could not have borne such violent agitation for many days together. Tell Dr. Heberden, that in the coach I read 'Ciceronianus,' which I concluded as I entered Lichfield. My affection and understanding went along with Erasmus, except that once or twice he somewhat unskilfully entangles Cicero's civil or moral with his rhetorical character.—I staid five days at Lichfield, but, being unable to walk, had no great pleasure, and yesterday (19th) I came hither, where I am to try what air and attention can perform.—Of any improvement in my health I cannot yet please myself with the perception. ******.—The asthma has no abatement. Opiates stop the fit, so as that I can sit and sometimes lie easy, but they do not now procure me the power of motion; and

[1] [If Sir J. Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi sometimes took an unfavourable impression of Dr. Johnson's conduct, Mr. Boswell occasionally runs into the other extreme. Surely it is no such exemplary proof of "*tenderness of affection*" that he, for *thirty-one years*, had neglected one of the first offices not merely of affection, but of common regard, and seems to have been awakened at last to the melancholy recollection only by the near prospect of needing, himself, a similar memorial. Mr. Boswell's injudicious panegyric forces our thoughts into a contrary direction.—ED.]

[2] See vol. i. p. 320.—BOSWELL.

[3] Printed in his works.—BOSWELL.

[4] [This, by an error either of the transcript or the press, was printed *recovers*: Mr. Malone made the correction.—ED.]

I am afraid that my general strength of body does not increase. The weather indeed is not benign; but how low is he sunk whose strength depends upon the weather! I am now looking into Floyer [1], who lived with his asthma to almost his ninetieth year. His book, by want of order, is obscure; and his asthma, I think, not of the same kind with mine. Something, however, I may perhaps learn.—My appetite still continues keen enough; and what I consider as a symptom of radical health, I have a voracious delight in raw summer fruit, of which I was less eager a few years ago.—You will be pleased to communicate this account to Dr. Heberden, and if any thing is to be done, let me have your joint opinion.—Now—*abite, curæ!*—let me inquire after the Club [2]."

"31st July.

"Not recollecting that Dr. Heberden might be at Windsor, I thought your letter long in coming. But, you know, *nocitura petuntur;* the letter which I so much desired tells me that I have lost one of my best and tenderest friends [3]. My comfort is, that he appeared to live like a man that had always before his eyes the fragility of our present existence, and was therefore, I hope, not unprepared to meet his Judge.—Your attention, dear sir, and that of Dr. Heberden, to my health, is extremely kind. I am loth to think that I grow worse; and cannot fairly prove even to my own partiality that I grow much better."

"5th August.

"I return you thanks, dear sir, for your unwearied attention both medicinal and friendly, and hope to prove the effect of your care by living to acknowledge it."

"12th August.

"Pray be so kind as to have me in your thoughts, and mention my case to others as you have opportunity. I seem to myself neither to gain nor lose strength. I have lately tried milk, but have yet found no advantage, and am afraid of it merely as a liquid. My appetite is still good, which I know is dear Dr. Heberden's criterion of the *vis vitæ*.—As we cannot now see each other, do not omit to write, for you cannot think with what warmth of expectation I reckon the hours of a post-day."

"14th August.

"I have hitherto sent you only melancholy letters; you will be glad to hear some better account. Yesterday the asthma remitted, perceptibly remitted, and I moved with more ease than I have enjoyed for many weeks. May God continue his mercy. This account I would not delay, because I am not a lover of complaints or complainers, and yet I have, since we parted, uttered nothing till now but terrour and sorrow. Write to me, dear sir."

"16th August.

"Better, I hope, and better. My respiration gets more and more ease and liberty. I went to church yesterday, after a very liberal dinner, without any inconvenience; it is indeed no long walk, but I never walked it without difficulty, since I came, before. ******* the intention was only to overpower the seeming *vis inertiæ* of the pectoral and pulmonary muscles.—I am favoured with a degree of ease that very much delights me, and do not despair of another race up the stairs of the Academy.—If I were, however, of a humour to see, or to show, the state of my body, on the dark side, I might say,

'Quid te exempta juvat spinis de pluribus una?'

The nights are still sleepless, and the water rises, though it does not rise very fast. Let us, however, rejoice in all the good that we have. The remission of one disease will enable nature to combat the rest.—The squills I have not neglected; for I have taken more than a hundred drops a day, and one day took two hundred and fifty, which, according to the popular equivalent of a drop to a grain, is more than half an ounce. I thank you, dear sir, for your attention in ordering the medicines; your attention to me has never failed. If the virtue of medicines could be enforced by the benevolence of the prescriber, how soon should I be well!"

"19th August.

"The relaxation of the asthma still continues, yet I do not trust it wholly to itself, but soothe it now and then with an opiate. I not only perform the perpetual act of respiration with less labour, but I can walk with fewer intervals of rest, and with greater freedom of motion. I never thought well of Dr. James's compounded medicines, his ingredients appear to me sometimes inefficacious and trifling, and sometimes heterogeneous and destructive of each other. This prescription exhibits a composition of about three hundred and thirty grains, in which there are four grains of emetick tartar, and six drops [of] thebaic tincture. He that writes thus surely writes for show. The basis of his medicine is the gum ammoniacum, which dear Dr. Lawrence used to give, but of which I never saw any effect We will, if you please, let this medicine alone The squills have every suffrage

[1] [Sir John Floyer, M. D. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 32.—Ed.]

[2] At the Essex Head, Essex-street.—Boswell.

[3] Mr. Allen, the printer.—Boswell

and in the squills we will rest for the present."

"21st August.

"The kindness which you show by having me in your thoughts upon all occasions will, I hope, always fill my heart with gratitude. Be pleased to return my thanks to Sir George Baker [1], for the consideration which he has bestowed upon me. Is this the balloon that has been so long expected, this balloon [2] to which I subscribed, but without payment? It is pity that philosophers have been disappointed, and shame that they have been cheated; but I know not well how to prevent either. Of this experiment I have read nothing: where was it exhibited? and who was the man that ran away with so much money? Continue, dear sir, to write often, and more at a time; for none of your prescriptions operate to their proper uses more certainly than your letters operate as cordials."

"26th August.

"I suffered you to escape last post without a letter, but you are not to expect such indulgence very often; for I write not so much because I have any thing to say, as because I hope for an answer; and the vacancy of my life here makes a letter of great value. I have here little company and little amusement, and, thus abandoned to the contemplation of my own miseries, I am something gloomy and depressed; this too I resist as I can, and find opium, I think, useful; but I seldom take more than one grain. Is not this strange weather? Winter absorbed the spring, and now autumn is come before we have had summer. But let not our kindness for each other imitate the inconstancy of the seasons."

"2d Sept.

"Mr. Windham has been here to see me: he came, I think, forty miles out of his way, and staid about a day and a half; perhaps I make the time shorter than it was. Such conversation I shall not have again till I come back to the regions of literature; and there Windham is *inter stellas* [3] *Luna minores*."—(He then mentions the effects of certain medicines, as taken; and adds) "Nature is recovering its original powers, and the functions returning to their proper state. God continue his mercies, and grant me to use them rightly."

"9th September.

"Do you know the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire? And have you ever seen Chatsworth? I was at Chatsworth on Monday: I had seen it before, but never when its owners were at home: I was very kindly received, and honestly pressed to stay; but I told them that a sick man is not a fit inmate of a great house. But I hope to go again some time."

"11th September.

"I think nothing grows worse, but all rather better, except sleep, and that of late has been at its old pranks. Last evening, I felt what I had not known for a long time, an inclination to walk for amusement; I took a short walk, and came back again neither breathless nor fatigued. This has been a gloomy, frigid, ungenial summer; but of late it seems to mend: I hear the heat sometimes mentioned, but I do not feel it:

'Præterea minimus gelido jam in corpore sanguis
Febre calet solâ.'——

JUV. s. x. v. 217.

I hope, however, with good help, to find means of supporting a winter at home, and to hear and tell at the Club what is doing, and what ought to be doing, in the world. I have no company here, and shall naturally come home hungry for conversation. To wish you, dear sir, more leisure, would not be kind; but what leisure you have, you must bestow upon me."

"16th September.

"I have now let you alone for a long time, having indeed little to say. You charge me somewhat unjustly with luxury. At Chatsworth, you should remember that I have eaten but once; and the doctor, with whom I live, follows a milk diet. I grow no fatter, though my stomach, if it be not disturbed by physick, never fails me. I now grow weary of solitude, and think of removing next week to Lichfield, a place of more society, but otherwise of less convenience. When I am settled, I shall write again. Of the hot weather that you mentioned, we have [not] had in Derbyshire very much; and for myself I seldom feel heat, and suppose that my frigidity is the effect of my distemper—a supposition which naturally leads me to hope that a hotter climate may be useful. But I hope to stand another English winter."

"Lichfield, 29th September.

"On one day I had three letters about

[1] [The celebrated physician, created a baronet in 1776, died June, 1809, ætat. 88.—ED.]

[2] [Does Dr. Johnson here allude to the unsuccessful attempt made, in 1784, by De Moret, who was determined to anticipate Lunardi in his first experiment in England? "Moret attempted to inflate his balloon with rarified air, but by some accident in the process it sunk upon the fire, and the populace, who regarded the whole as an imposture, rushing in, completely destroyed the machine."—*Brayley's Londiniana*, vol. ii. 162, *note*.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

[3] It is remarkable that so good a Latin scholar as Johnson should have been so inattentive to the metre, as by mistake to have written *stellas* instead of *ignes*.—BOSWELL.

the air-balloon[1]: yours was far the best, and has enabled me to impart to my friends in the country an idea of this species of amusement. In amusement, mere amusement, I am afraid it must end, for I do not find that its course can be directed so as that it should serve any purposes of communication; and it can give no new intelligence of the state of the air at different heights, till they have ascended above the height of mountains, which they seem never likely to do. I came hither on the 27th. How long I shall stay, I have not determined. My dropsy is gone, and my asthma much remitted, but I have felt myself a little declining these two days, or at least to-day; but such vicissitudes must be expected. One day may be worse than another; but this last month is far better than the former: if the next should be as much better than this, I shall run about the town on my own legs."

"6th October.

"The fate of the balloon I do not much lament: to make new balloons is to repeat the jest again. We now know a method of mounting into the air, and, I think, are not likely to know more. The vehicles can serve no use till we can guide them; and they can gratify no curiosity till we mount with them to greater heights than we can reach without; till we rise above the tops of the highest mountains, which we have yet not done. We know the state of the air in all its regions, to the top of Teneriffe, and therefore learn nothing from those who navigate a balloon below the clouds. The first experiment, however, was bold, and deserved applause and reward: but since it has been performed, and its event is known, I had rather now find a medicine that can ease an asthma."

"25th October.

"You write to me with a zeal that animates and a tenderness that melts me. I am not afraid either of a journey to London, or a residence in it. I came down with little fatigue, and am now not weaker. In the smoky atmosphere I was delivered from the dropsy, which I consider as the original and radical disease. The town is my element[2]: there are my friends, there are my books, to which I have not yet bid farewell, and there are my amusements Sir Joshua told me long ago, that my vocation was to publick life, and I hope still to keep my station, till God shall bid me *Go in peace*".

"TO MR. HOOLE.

"Ashbourne, 7th August.

"Since I was here, I have two little letters from you, and have not had the gratitude to write. But every man is most free with his best friends, because he does not suppose that they can suspect him of intentional incivility. One reason for my omission is, that being in a place to which you are wholly a stranger, I have no topicks of correspondence. If you had any knowledge of Ashbourne, I could tell you of two Ashbourne men, who, being last week condemned at Derby to be hanged for robbery, went and hanged themselves in their cell. But this, however it may supply us with talk, is nothing to you. Your kindness, I know, would make you glad to hear some good of me, but I have not much good to tell: if I grow not worse, it is all that I can say. I hope Mrs. Hoole receives more help from her migration. Make her my compliments, and write again to, dear sir, your affectionate servant."

"13th August

"I thank you for your affectionate letter. I hope we shall both be the better for each other's friendship, and I hope we shall not very quickly be parted. Tell Mr. Nichols that I shall be glad of his correspondence when his business allows him a little remission; though to wish him less business, that I may have more pleasure, would be too selfish. To pay for seats at the balloon is not very necessary, because in less than a minute they who gaze at a mile's distance will see all that can be seen. About the wings, I am of your mind: they cannot at all assist it, nor I think regulate its motion. I am now grown somewhat easier in my body, but my mind is sometimes depressed. About the Club I am in no great pain. The forfeitures go on, and the house, I hear, is improved for our future meetings. I hope we shall meet often and sit long."

"4th September.

"Your letter was indeed long in coming, but it was very welcome. Our acquaintance has now subsisted long, and our recol-

[1] [Lunardi had ascended from the Artillery Ground on the 15th of this month, and as this was the first ascent in a balloon which had been witnessed in England, it is not surprising that very general interest was excited by the spectacle, and that so many allusions should be made to it by Johnson and his correspondents.—MARKLAND.]

[2] His love of London continually appears. In a letter from him to Mrs. Smart, wife of his friend the poet, which is published in a well-written life of him, prefixed to an edition of his poems, in 1791, there is the following sentence: "To one that has passed so many years in the pleasures and opulence of London, there are few places that can give much delight."

Once, upon reading that line in the curious epitaph quoted in "The Spectator,"

"Born in New-England, did in London die,"

he laughed and said, "I do not wonder at this It would have been strange, if, born in London he had died in New-England."—BOSWELL.

lection of each other involves a great space, and many little occurrences which melt the thoughts to tenderness. Write to me, therefore, as frequently as you can. I hear from Dr. Brocklesby and Mr. Ryland[1] that the Club is not crowded. I hope we shall enliven it when winter brings us together."

"TO DR. BURNEY.

"2nd August.

"The weather, you know, has not been balmy. I am now reduced to think, and am at least content to talk, of the weather. Pride must have a fall[2]. I have lost dear Mr. Allen; and wherever I turn, the dead or the dying meet my notice, and force my attention upon misery and mortality. Mrs. Burney's escape from so much danger, and her ease after so much pain, throws, however, some radiance of hope upon the gloomy prospect. May her recovery be perfect, and her continuance long! I struggle hard for life. I take physick and take air: my friend's chariot is always ready. We have run this morning twenty-four miles, and could run forty-eight more. *But who can run the race with death?*"

"4th September.

[Concerning a private transaction, in which his opinion was asked, and after giving it, he makes the following reflections, which are applicable on other occasions.] "Nothing deserves more compassion than wrong conduct with good meaning; than loss or obloquy suffered by one who, as he is conscious only of good intentions, wonders why he loses that kindness which he wishes to preserve; and not knowing his own fault—if, as may sometimes happen, nobody will tell him—goes on to offend by his endeavours to please. I am delighted by finding that our opinions are the same. You will do me a real kindness by continuing to write. A post-day has now been long a day of recreation."

"1st November

"Our correspondence paused for want of topicks. I had said what I had to say on the matter proposed to my consideration, and nothing remained but to tell you that I waked or slept, that I was more or less sick. I drew my thoughts in upon myself, and supposed yours employed upon your book. That your book has been delayed I am glad, since you have gained an opportunity of being more exact. Of the caution necessary in adjusting narratives there is no end. Some tell what they do not know, that they may not seem ignorant, and others from mere indifference about truth. All truth is not, indeed, of equal importance: but, if little violations are allowed, every violation will in time be thought little; and a writer should keep himself vigilantly on his guard against the first temptations to negligence or supineness. I had ceased to write, because respecting you I had no more to say, and respecting myself could say little good. I cannot boast of advancement, and in case of convalescence it may be said, with few exceptions, *Non progredi est regredi.* I hope I may be excepted. My great difficulty was with my sweet Fanny[3], who, by her artifice of inserting her letter in yours, had given me a precept of frugality which I was not at liberty to neglect; and I know not who were in town under whose cover I could send my letter. I rejoice to hear that you are so well, and have a delight particularly sympathetick in the recovery of Mrs Burney."

"TO MR. LANGTON.

"25th August.

"The kindness of your last letter, and my omission to answer it, begins to give you, even in my opinion, a right to recriminate, and to charge me with forgetfulness for the absent. I will therefore delay no longer to give an account of myself, and wish I could relate what would please either myself or my friend. On July 13 I left London, partly in hope of help from new air and change of place, and partly excited by the sick man's impatience of the present. I got to Lichfield in a stage vehicle, with very little fatigue, in two days, and had the consolation[4] to find that since my last visit

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 75, and vol. ii. p. 364. Mr. Ryland died 24th July, 1798, æt. 81.—ED.]

[2] There was no information for which Dr. Johnson was less grateful than for that which concerned the weather. It was in allusion to his impatience with those who were reduced to keep conversation alive by observations on the weather, that he applied the old proverb to himself. If any one of his intimate acquaintance told him it was hot or cold, wet or dry, windy or calm, he would stop them by saying, "Poh! poh! you are telling us that of which none but men in a mine or a dungeon can be ignorant. Let us bear with patience, or enjoy in quiet, elementary changes, whether for the better or the worse, as they are never secrets."—BURNEY. [He says "pride must have a fall," in allusion to his own former assertions, that the weather had no effect on human health. See *Idler*, No. 11, and *ante*, vol. i. pp. 142 and 193.—ED.]

[3] The celebrated Miss Fanny Burney.—BOSWELL.

[4] Probably some word has been here omitted before *consolation*—perhaps *sad* or *miserable*, or the word *consolation* has been printed by mistake, instead of *mortification:* but the original letter not being now [1798] in Mr Langton's

my three old acquaintances are all dead. July 20 I went to Ashbourne, where I have been till now. The house in which we live is repairing. I live in too much solitude, and am often deeply dejected. I wish we were nearer, and rejoice in your removal to London. A friend at once cheerful and serious is a great acquisition. Let us not neglect one another for the little time which Providence allows us to hope. Of my health I cannot tell you, what my wishes persuaded me to expect, that it is much improved by the season or by remedies. I am sleepless; my legs grow weary with a very few steps, and the water breaks its boundaries in some degree. The asthma, however, has remitted: my breath is still much obstructed, but is more free than it was. Nights of watchfulness produce torpid days. I read very little, though I am alone; for I am tempted to supply in the day what I lost in bed. This is my history; like all other histories, a narrative of misery. Yet I am so much better than in the beginning of the year, that I ought to be ashamed of complaining. I now sit and write with very little sensibility of pain or weakness; but when I rise, I shall find my legs betraying me. Of the money which you mentioned I have no immediate need: keep it, however, for me, unless some exigence requires it. Your papers I will show you certainly when you would see them; but I am a little angry at you for not keeping minutes of your own *acceptum et expensum*, and think a little time might be spared from Aristophanes for the *res familiares*. Forgive me, for I mean well. I hope, dear sir, that you and Lady Rothes and all the young people, too many to enumerate, are well and happy. God bless you all."

"TO MR. WINDHAM.

"August.

"The tenderness with which you have been pleased to treat me through my long illness, neither health nor sickness can, I hope, make me forget; and you are not to suppose that after we parted you were no longer in my mind. But what can a sick man say, but that he is sick? His thoughts are necessarily concentred in himself: he neither receives nor can give delight; his inquiries are after alleviations of pain, and his efforts are to catch some momentary comfort. Though I am now in the neighbourhood of the Peak, you must expect no account of its wonders, of its hills, its waters, its caverns, or its mines; but I will tell you, dear sir, what I hope you will not hear with less satisfaction, that, for about a week past, my asthma has been less afflictive."

"Lichfield, 2d October.

"I believe you had been long enough acquainted with the *phœnomena* of sickness not to be surprised that a sick man wishes to be where he is not, and where it appears to every body but himself that he might easily be, without having the resolution to remove. I thought Ashbourne a solitary place, but did not come hither till last Monday. I have here more company, but my health has for this last week not advanced; and in the languor of disease how little can be done! Whitner or when I shall make my next remove, I cannot tell; but I entreat you, dear sir, to let me know from time to time where you may be found, for your residence is a very powerful attractive to, sir, your most humble servant."

"TO DR. PERKINS.

"Lichfield, 4th October, 1784

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot but flatter myself that your kindness for me will make you glad to know where I am, and in what state.

"I have been struggling very hard with my diseases. My breath has been very much obstructed, and the water has attempted to encroach upon me again. I passed the first part of the summer at Oxford, afterwards I went to Lichfield, thence to Ashbourne in Derbyshire, and a week ago I returned to Lichfield.

"My breath is now much easier, and the water is in a great measure run away, so that I hope to see you again before winter.

"Please make my compliments to Mrs. Perkins, and to Mr. and Mrs. Barclay. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON.

"Lichfield, 20th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Considering what reason you gave me in the spring to conclude that you took part in whatever good or evil might befall me, I ought not to have omitted so long the account which I am now about to give you. My diseases are an asthma and a dropsy, and, what is less curable, seventy-five. Of the dropsy, in the beginning of the summer, or in the spring, I recovered to a degree which struck with wonder both me and my physicians: the asthma now is likewise for a time very much relieved. I went to Oxford, where the asthma was very tyrannical, and the dropsy began again to threaten me; but seasonable physick stopped the inundation: I then returned to London, and in July took a resolution to visit Staffordshire and Derbyshire, where I am yet struggling with my disease. The dropsy made another attack, and was not easily ejected, but at last gave way. The asthma suddenly remitted in bed on the 13th

hands, the errour (if it be one) cannot be corrected.—MALONE

of August, and though now very oppressive, is, I think, still something gentler than it was before the remission. My limbs are miserably debilitated, and my nights are sleepless and tedious. When you read this, dear sir, you are not sorry that I wrote no sooner. I will not prolong my complaints. I hope still to see you *in a happier hour*, to talk over what we have often talked, and perhaps to find new topicks of merriment, or new incitements to curiosity. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JOHN PARADISE, ESQ.[1]
"Lichfield, 27th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Though in all my summer's excursion I have given you no account of myself, I hope you think better of me than to imagine it possible for me to forget you, whose kindness to me has been too great and too constant not to have made its impression on a harder breast than mine. Silence is not very culpable, when nothing pleasing is suppressed. It would have alleviated none of your complaints to have read my vicissitudes of evil. I have struggled hard with very formidable and obstinate maladies; and though I cannot talk of health, think all praise due to my Creator and Preserver for the continuance of my life. The dropsy has made two attacks, and has given way to medicine; the asthma is very oppressive, but that has likewise once remitted. I am very weak and very sleepless; but it is time to conclude the tale of misery. I hope, dear sir, that you grow better, for you have likewise your share of human evil, and that your lady and the young charmers are well. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. GEORGE NICOL[2].
"Ashbourne. 19th August, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Since we parted, I have been much oppressed by my asthma, but it has lately been less laborious. When I sit I am almost at ease; and I can walk, though yet very little, with less difficulty for this week past than before. I hope I shall again enjoy my friends, and that you and I shall have a little more literary conversation. Where I now am, every thing is very liberally provided for me but conversation. My friend is sick himself, and the reciprocation of complaints and groans affords no much of either pleasure or instruction What we have not at home this town does not supply; and I shall be glad of a little imported intelligence, and hope that you will bestow, now and then, a little time on the relief and entertainment of, sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. CRUIKSHANK.
"Ashbourne, 4th September, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Do not suppose that I forget you: I hope I shall never be accused of forgetting my benefactors. I had, til. lately, nothing to write but complaints upon complaints of miseries upon miseries; but within this fortnight I have received great relief. Have your lectures any vacation? If you are released from the necessity of daily study, you may find time for a letter to me.—[In this letter he states the particulars of his case.]—In return for this account of my health, let me have a good account of yours, and of your prosperity in all your undertakings. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. THOMAS DAVIES.
"14th August.

"The tenderness with which you always treat me makes me culpable in my own eyes for having omitted to write in so long a separation. I had, indeed, nothing to say that you could wish to hear. All has been hitherto misery accumulated upon misery, disease corroborating disease, til. yesterday my asthma was perceptibly and unexpectedly mitigated. I am much comforted with this short relief, and am willing to flatter myself that it may continue and improve. I have at present such a degree of ease as not only may admit the comforts but the duties of life. Make my compliments to Mrs. Davies.—Poor dear Allan!—he was a good man."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.
"Ashbourne, 21st July.

"The tenderness with which I am treated by my friends makes it reasonable to suppose that they are desirous to know the state of my health, and a desire so benevolent ought to be gratified.—I came to Lichfield in two days without any painful fatigue, and on Monday came hither, where I purpose to stay and try what air and regularity will effect. I cannot yet persuade myself that I have made much progress in recovery. My sleep is little, my breath is very much encumbered, and my legs are very weak. The water has increased a little, but has again run off. The most distressing symptom is want of sleep."

[1] Son of the late Peter Paradise, Esq. his Britannick majesty's consul at Salonica in Macedonia, by his lady, a native of that country. He studied at Oxford, and has been honoured by that university with the degree of LL. D. He is distinguished not only by his learning and talents, but by an amiable disposition, gentleness of manners, and a very general acquaintance with well-informed and accomplished persons of almost all nations.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 22.—ED.]

[2] Bookseller to his majesty.—BOSWELL.

"19th August.

"Having had since our separation little to say that could please you or myself by saying, I have not been lavish of useless letters; but I flatter myself that you will partake of the pleasure with which I can now tell you that, about a week ago, I felt suddenly a sensible remission of my asthma, and consequently a greater lightness of action and motion.—Of this grateful alleviation I know not the cause, nor dare depend upon its continuance; but while it lasts I endeavour to enjoy it, and am desirous of communicating, while it lasts, my pleasure to my friends.—Hitherto, dear sir, I had written before the post, which stays in this town but a little while, brought me your letter. Mr. Davies seems to have represented my little tendency to recovery in terms too splendid. I am still restless, still weak, still watery, but the asthma is less oppressive.—Poor Ramsay[1]! On which side soever I turn, mortality presents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield when I was last there, and now found them all dead. I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan, than I am told that I shall see him no more. That we must all die, we always knew: I wish I had sooner remembered it. Do not think me intrusive or importunate, if I now call, dear sir, on you to remember it."

"2d September.

"I am glad that a little favour from the court has intercepted your furious purposes[2]. I could not in any case have approved such publick violence of resentment, and should have considered any who encouraged it as rather seeking sport for themselves than honour for you. Resentment gratifies him who intended an injury, and pains him unjustly who did not intend it. But all this is now superfluous.—I still continue, by God's mercy, to mend. My breath is easier, my nights are quieter, and my legs are less in bulk and stronger in use. I have, however, yet a great deal to overcome before I can yet attain even an old man's health.—Write, do write to me now and then. We are now old acquaintance, and perhaps few people have lived so much and so long together with less cause of complaint on either side. The retrospection of this is very pleasant, and I hope we shall never think on each other with less kindness."

"9th September.

"I could not answer your letter before this day, because I went on the sixth to Chatsworth, and did not come back till the post was gone. Many words, I hope, are not necessary between you and me to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the chancellor's liberality and your kind offices. I did not indeed expect that what was asked by the chancellor would have been refused[3]; but since it has, we will not tell that any thing has been asked.—I have enclosed a letter to the chancellor, which, when you have read it, you will be pleased to seal with a head or other general seal, and convey it to him. Had I sent it directly to him, I should have seemed to overlook the favour of your intervention.—My last letter told you of my advance in health, which, I think, in the whole still continues. Of the hydropick tumour there is now very little appearance: the asthma is much less troublesome, and seems to remit something day after day. I do not despair of supporting an English winter.—At Chatsworth, I met young Mr. Burke, who led me very commodiously into conversation with the duke and duchess. We had a very good morning. The dinner was publick."

"18th September.

"I flattered myself that this week would have given me a letter from you, but none has come. Write to me now and then, but direct your next to Lichfield.—I think, and I hope am sure, that I still grow better. I have sometimes good nights, but am still in my legs weak, but so much mended, that I go to Lichfield in hope of being able to pay my visits on foot, for there are no coaches.—I have three letters this day, all about the balloon: I could have been content with one. Do not write about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say."

"2d October.

"I am always proud of your approbation, and therefore was much pleased that you liked my letter. When you copied it, you invaded the chancellor's right rather than mine.—The refusal I did not expect, but I had never thought much about it, for I doubted whether the chancellor had so

[1] Allan Ramsay, Esq. painter to his majesty, who died August 10, 1784, in the seventy-first year of his age, much regretted by his friends. —Boswell. [See *ante*, p. 152.]

[2] [This no doubt refers to the squabbles in the Academy, and an intention of Sir Joshua to resign the chair; a purpose, however, which he executed in Feb. 1790, but he resumed it again within a month.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 411, *et seq.* There is some obscurity in this matter. It appears that Sir Joshua understood Lord Thurlow in his *verbal* communication to have represented his request as *rejected*, though in the *letter* of the 18th November he says the contrary. Perhaps the solution may be, that Lord Thurlow happened at the moment to be, as he often was, on bad terms with Mr. Pitt, in whose special department the increase of a pension would be, and that he did not like to speak to him on the subject.—Ed.]

much tenderness for me as to ask. He, being keeper of the king's conscience, ought not to be supposed capable of an improper petition.—All is not gold that glitters, as we have often been told; and the adage is verified in your place and my favour; but if what happens does not make us richer, we must bid it welcome if it makes us wiser.—I do not at present grow better, nor much worse. My hopes, however, are somewhat abated, and a very great loss is the loss of hope; but I struggle on as I can."

"TO MR. JOHN NICHOLS [1].

"Lichfield, 20th October.

"When you were here, you were pleased, as I am told, to think my absence an inconvenience. I should certainly have been very glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information about my native place, of which, however, I know not much, and have reason to believe that not much is known.—Though I have not given you any amusement, I have received amusement from you. At Ashbourne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow 'Mr. Bowyer's Life;' a book so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could, now and then, have told you some hints worth your notice; and perhaps we may talk a life over. I hope we shall be much together: you must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but I think he was a very good man.—I have made little progress in recovery. I am very weak and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

This various mass of correspondence, which I have thus brought together [2], is valuable, both as an addition to the store which the publick already has of Johnson's writings, and as exhibiting a genuine and noble specimen of vigour and vivacity of mind, which neither age nor sickness could impair or diminish [3].

It may be observed, that his writing in every way, whether for the publick, or privately to his friends, was by fits and starts; for we see frequently that many letters are written on the same day. When he had once overcome his aversion to begin, he was, I suppose, desirous to go on, in order to relieve his mind from the uneasy reflection of delaying what he ought to do.

While in the country, notwithstanding the accumulation of illness which he endured, his mind did not lose its powers. He translated an ode of Horace [4], which is printed in his works, and composed several prayers. I shall insert one of them, which is so wise and energetick, so philosophica and so pious, that I doubt not of its affording consolation to many a sincere Christian when in a state of mind to which I believe the best are sometimes liable.

"AGAINST INQUISITIVE AND PERPLEXING THOUGHTS.

"O Lord, my maker and protector, who hast graciously sent me into this world to work out my salvation, enable me to drive from me all such unquiet and perplexing thoughts as may mislead or hinder me in the practice of those duties which thou hast required. When I behold the works of thy hands, and consider the course of thy providence, give me grace always to remember that thy thoughts are not my thoughts, nor thy ways my ways. And while it shall please thee to continue me in this world, where much is to be done and little to be known, teach me, by thy Holy Spirit, to withdraw my mind from unprofitable and dangerous inquiries, from difficulties vainly curious, and doubts impossible to be solved. Let me rejoice in the light which thou hast imparted, let me serve thee with active zeal and humble confidence, and wait with patient expectation for the time in which the soul which thou receivest shall be satisfied with knowledge. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

And here I am enabled fully to refute a very unjust reflection, by Sir John Hawkins, both against Dr. Johnson and his faithful servant Mr. Francis Barber; as if both of them had been guilty of culpable

[1] [This very respectable man, who contributed so largely to the literary and topographical history of his country, died in 1826, at the advanced age of eighty-two. "His long life," as his friend and biographer, Mr. Alexander Chalmers, has truly observed, "was spent in the promotion of useful knowledge." The Life of Bowyer, to which Johnson refers, was republished in 1812-15, with large additions, in nine vols. 8vo., under the title of "Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century." It is a storehouse of facts and dates, and every man interested in literary biography must own the vast obligations which are due to its indefatigable compiler.—MARKLAND.]

[2] [This is the Editor's example and excuse for having brought together in a similar manner the extracts from Mrs. Thrale's correspondence.—ED.]

[3] [Mr. Boswell carries his panegyric a little too far; Johnson himself has assigned reasons *why* his letters at this period should *not* exhibit "vigour and vivacity of mind." He tells Mr. Nicol that every thing was liberally provided for him at Ashbourne but *conversation;* and, from his letter to Dr. Burney (p. 418), he appears to have been reduced to talk about the weather and other common-place topics. The want of society, and the fact that Johnson was then "struggling with disease," will account for his correspondence turning so exclusively upon himself and his own complaints.—MARKLAND.]

[4] [Book iv. ode vii.—*Diffugere nives.*—ED.

neglect towards a person of the name of Heely, whom Sir John chooses to call a *relation* of Dr. Johnson's. The fact is, that Mr. Heely was not his relation: he had indeed been married to one of his cousins, but she had died without having children, and he had married another woman; so that even the slight connexion which there once had been by *alliance* was dissolved. Dr. Johnson, who had shown very great liberality to this man while his first wife was alive, as has appeared in a former part of this work [1], was humane and charitable enough to continue his bounty to him occasionally; but surely there was no strong call of duty upon him or upon his legatee to do more. The following letter, obligingly communicated to me by Mr. Andrew Strahan, will confirm what I have stated:

"TO MR. HEELY, NO. 5, IN PYE-STREET, WESTMINSTER.

"Ashbourne, 12th August, 1784.

"SIR,—As necessity obliges you to call so soon again upon me, you should at least have told the smallest sum that will supply your present want: you cannot suppose that I have much to spare. Two guineas is as much as you ought to be behind with your creditor.—If you wait on Mr. Strahan, in New-street, Fetter-lane, or, in his absence, on Mr. Andrew Strahan, show this, by which they are entreated to advance you two guineas, and to keep this as a voucher. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Indeed it is very necessary to keep in mind that Sir John Hawkins has unaccountably viewed Johnson's character and conduct in almost every particular with an unhappy prejudice [2].

I shall add one instance only to those which I have thought it incumbent on me to point out. Talking of Mr. Garrick's having signified his willingness to let Johnson have the loan of any of his books to assist him in his edition of Shakspeare, Sir John says (p. 444), "Mr. Garrick knew not what risk he ran by this offer. Johnson had so strange a forgetfulness of obligations of this sort, that few who lent him books ever saw them again." This surely conveys a most unfavourable insinuation, and has been so understood [3]. Sir John mentions the single case of a curious edition of Politian, which he tells us appeared to belong to Pembroke College, which probably had been considered by Johnson as his own for upwards of fifty years. Would it not be fairer to consider this as an inadvertence, and draw no general inference? The truth is, that Johnson was so attentive, that in one of his manuscripts in my possession he has marked in two columns books borrowed and books lent.

In Sir John Hawkins's compilation there are, however, some passages concerning Johnson which have unquestionable merit. One of them I shall transcribe, in justice to a writer whom I have had too much occasion to censure, and to show my fairness as the biographer of my illustrious friend: "There was wanting in his conduct and behaviour that dignity which results from a regular and orderly course of action, and by an irresistible power commands esteem. He could not be said to be a staid man, nor so to have adjusted in his mind the balance of reason and passion, as to give occasion to say what may be observed of some men, that all they do is just, fit, and right." Yet a judicious friend well suggests, "It might, however, have been added, that such men are often merely just, and rigidly correct, while their hearts are cold and unfeeling; and that Johnson's virtues were of a much higher tone than those of the *staid, orderly man* here described."

We now behold Johnson for the last time in his native city, for which he ever retained a warm affection, and which by a sudden apostrophe, under the word *Lich*, he introduces with reverence into his immortal work, "The English Dictionary:" —"*Salve magna parens* [4]!" While here,

[1] *Ante*, vol. i. p. 237.—BOSWELL.

[2] [This seems but too true. Miss Hawkins confesses it in the matter of the Essex-street Club. In the case of Heely it is still more flagrant, and without any justification. We shall see presently, that in the last scene of Johnson's life a transaction took place (see *sub* 5th Dec. 1784) which may have had the effect of souring the feeling of Sir John towards his old friend and his servant Barber. It must, however, be recollected, that Mr. Boswell was very angry that Hawkins had anticipated him as Johnson's biographer, and was by that feeling betrayed into a great deal of injustice towards him.—ED.]

[3] [This surely is over-stated. There are many proofs that Johnson was slovenly in such matters, but no one ever thought it an imputation of so grave a nature as Mr. Boswell here chooses to represent it.—ED.]

[4] The following circumstance, mutually to the honour of Johnson and the corporation of his native city, has been communicated to me by the Rev. Dr. Vyse from the town-clerk: "Mr. Simpson has now before him a record of the respect and veneration which the corporation of Lichfield, in the year 1767, had for the merits and learning of Dr. Johnson. His father built the corner house in the market-place, the two fronts of which, towards Market and Broad-market Street, stood upon waste land of the corporation, under a forty years' lease, which was then expired. On the 15th of August, 1767, at a common-hall of the bailiffs and citizens, it was ordered (and that without any solicitation), that a lease should be granted

he felt a revival of all the tenderness of filial affection, an instance of which appeared in his ordering the grave-stone and inscription over Elizabeth Blaney [1] to be substantially and carefully renewed.

To Mr. Henry White [2], a young clergyman, with whom he now formed an intimacy, so as to talk to him with great freedom, he mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of having been an undutiful son. "Once, indeed," said he, "I was disobedient: I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault. I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bare-headed in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory [3]."

"I told him," says Miss Seward, "in one of my latest visits to him, of a wonderful learned pig which I had seen at Nottingham; and which did all that we have observed exhibited by dogs and horses. The subject amused him. 'Then,' said he, 'the pigs are a race unjustly calumniated. *Pig* has, it seems, not been wanting to *man* but *man* to *pig*. We do not allow *time* for his education; we kill him at a year old.' Mr. Henry White, who was present, observed that if this instance had happened in or before Pope's time, he would not have been justified in instancing the swine as the lowest degree of grovelling instinct. Dr Johnson seemed pleased with the observation, while the person who made it proceeded to remark, that great torture must have been employed, ere the indocility of the animal could have been subdued.—'Certainly,' said the Doctor; 'but,' turning to me, 'how old is your pig?' I told him, three years old. 'Then,' said he, 'the pig has no cause to complain; he would have been killed the first year if he had not been *educated*, and protracted existence is a good recompense for very considerable degrees of torture.'"

["TO DR. HEBERDEN, LONDON [1].

"Lichfield, 13th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Though I doubt not MS. but Dr. Brocklesby would communicate to you any incident in the variation of my health which appeared either curious or important, yet I think it time to give you some account of myself.

"Not long after the first great efflux of the water, I attained so much vigour of limbs and freedom of breath, that without rest or intermission, I went with Dr. Brocklesby to the top of the painter's Academy This was the greatest degree of health that I have obtained, and this, if it could continue, were perhaps sufficient; but my breath soon failed, and my body grew weak.

to Samuel Johnson, Doctor of Laws, of the encroachments at his house, for the term of ninety-nine years, at the old rent, which was five shillings: of which, as town-clerk, Mr. Simpson had the honour and pleasure of informing him, and that he was desired to accept it without paying any fine on the occasion; which lease was afterwards granted, and the Doctor died possessed of this property."—BOSWELL.

[1] See vol. i. p. 12.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Sacrist and one of the vicars of Lichfield Cathedral, 1831.—MARKLAND.]

[3] [The following account of this affair was communicated in MS. to the Editor, but he finds it is a transcript from Mr. Warner's "Tour through the Northern Counties of England," published in 1802, and has been quoted by Mr. Chalmers in his edition:—"During the last visit which the Doctor made to Lichfield, the friends with whom he was staying missed him one morning at the breakfast-table. On inquiring after him of the servants, they understood he had set off from Lichfield at a very early hour, without mentioning to any of the family whither he was going. The day passed without the return of the illustrious guest, and the party began to be very uneasy on his account, when, just before the supper-hour, the door opened, and the Doctor stalked into the room. A solemn silence of a few minutes ensued, nobody daring to inquire the cause of his absence, which was at length relieved by Johnson addressing the lady of the house in the following manner: 'Madam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure from your house this morning, but I was constrained to it by my conscience. Fifty years ago, madam, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety, which has ever since lain heavy on my mind, and has not till this day been expiated. My father, you recollect, was a bookseller, and had long been in the habit of attending ——— market, and opening a stall for the sale of his books during that day. Confined to his bed by indisposition, he requested me, this time fifty years ago, to visit the market, and attend the stall in his place. But, madam, my pride prevented me from doing my duty, and I gave my father a refusal. To do away the sin of this disobedience, I this day went in a post-chaise to ——, and going into the market at the time of high buisness, uncovered my head, and stood with it bare an hour before the stall which my father had formerly used, exposed to the sneers of the standers-by and the inclemency of the weather; a penance by which I trust I have propitiated Heaven for this only instance, I believe, of contumacy toward my father.'"—ED.]

[1] [Communicated to the Editor by Dr. Heberden, junior, through their common friend, Mr. Edward Hawke Locker.—ED.] ["Dr. Johnson being asked in his last illness what physician he had sent for—'Dr. Heberden,' replied he, '*ultimus Romanorum*—the last of our learned physicians.'"—*Nichols's Anec.* vol. vi. 598.—MARKLAND.]

"At Oxford (in June) I was much distressed by shortness of breath, so much that I never attempted to scale the library: the water gained upon me, but by the use of squills was in a great measure driven away.

"In July I went to Lichfield, and performed the journey with very little fatigue in the common vehicle, but found no help from my native air. I then removed to Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, where for some time I was oppressed very heavily by the asthma; and the dropsy had advanced so far, that I could not without great difficulty button me at my knees.

(Here are omitted some minute medical details.)

"No hydropical humour has been lately visible. The relaxation of my breath has not continued as it was at first, but neither do I breathe, with the same *angustiæ* and distress as before the remission. The summary of my state is this:

'I am deprived, by weakness and the asthma, of the power of walking beyond a very short space.

"I draw my breath with difficulty upon the least effort, but not with suffocation or pain.

"The dropsy still threatens, but gives way to medicine.

"The summer has passed without giving me any strength.

"My appetite is, I think, less keen than it was, but not so abated as that its decline can be observed by any but myself.

"Be pleased to think on me sometimes. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

ED. [From Lichfield he also wrote several letters to Sir J. Hawkins, in a tone which announced serious danger. The concluding paragraph of the last of them was as follows:

"7th November, 1784.

Hawk. p. 576. "I am relapsing into the dropsy very fast, and shall make such haste to town that it will be useless to write to me; but when I come, let me have the benefit of your advice, and the consolation of your company."]

As Johnson had now very faint hopes of recovery, and as Mrs. Thrale was no longer devoted to him, it might have been supposed [1] that he would naturally have chosen to remain in the comfortable house of his beloved wife's daughter, and end his life where he began it. But there was in him an animated and lofty spirit [2], and however complicated diseases might depress ordinary mortals, all who saw him beheld and acknowledged the *invictum animum Catonis* [3]. Such was his intellectual ardour even at this time, that he said to one friend, "Sir, I look upon every day to be lost in which I do not make a new acquaintance;" and to another, when talking of his illness, "I will be conquered; I will not capitulate." And such was his love of London, so high a relish had he of its magnificent extent and variety of intellectual entertainment, that he languished when absent from it, his mind having become quite luxurious from the long habit of enjoying the metropolis; and, therefore although at Lichfield, surrounded with friends who loved and revered him, and for whom he had a very sincere affection, he still found that such conversation as London affords could be found nowhere else. These feelings, joined probably to some flattering hopes of aid from the eminent physicians and surgeons in London, who kindly and generously attended him without accepting fees, made him resolve to return to the capital.

From Lichfield he came to Birmingham, where he passed a few days with his worthy old school-fellow, Mr. Hector, who thus writes to me: "He was very solicitous with me to recollect some of our most early transactions, and transmit them to him, for I perceived nothing gave him greater pleasure than calling to mind those days of our innocence. I complied with his request, and he only received them a few days before his death. I have transcribed for your inspection exactly the minutes I wrote to him." This paper having been found in his repositories after his death, Sir John Hawkins has inserted it entire, and I have made occasional use of it and other communications from Mr. Hector [4] in the course

[1] [Why? Miss Porter respected Dr. Johnson, but could have felt for him nothing like filial devotion. She was nearly as old almost as infirm, and more helpless than Johnson, and it is scarcely possible to imagine any arrangement less "*natural*" or less likely to be agreeable to either of the parties, and especially to Dr Johnson, than that *partnership in disease* which Mr. Boswell suggests.—ED.]

[2] Mr. Burke suggested to me, as applicable to Johnson, what Cicero, in his "Cato Major," says of Appius: "Intentum enim animum, tanquam arcum, habebat, nec languescens succumbebat senectuti;" repeating, at the same time, the following noble words in the same passage: "Ita enim senectus honesta est, si seipsa defendit, si jus suum retinet, si nemini emancipata est, si usque ad extremum vitæ spiritum vindicet jus suum."—BOSWELL.

[3] *Atrocem* animum Catonis are Horace's words, and it may be doubted whether *atrox* is used by any other original writer in the same sense. *Stubborn* is perhaps the most correct translation of this epithet.—MALONE.

[4] It is a most agreeable circumstance attending

of this work. I have both visited and corresponded with him since Dr. Johnson's death, and by my inquiries concerning a great variety of particulars have obtained additional information. I followed the same mode with the Reverend Dr. Taylor, in whose presence I wrote down a good deal of what he could tell; and he, at my request, signed his name, to give it authenticity. It is very rare to find any person who is able to give a distinct account of the life even of one whom he has known intimately, without questions being put to them. My friend Dr. Kippis has told me, that on this account it is a practice with him to draw out a biographical catechism.

Johnson then proceeded to Oxford, where he was again kindly received by Dr. Adams [1], who was pleased to give me the following account in one of his letters, (Feb. 17th, 1785): "His last visit was, I believe, to my house, which he left, after a stay of four or five days. We had much serious talk together, for which I ought to be the better as long as I live. You will remember some discourse which we had in the summer upon the subject of prayer, and the difficulty of this sort of composition. He reminded me of this, and of my having wished him to try his hand, and to give us a specimen of the style and manner that he approved. He added that he was now in a right frame of mind, and as he could not possibly employ his time better, he would in earnest set about it. But I find upon inquiry, that no papers of this sort were left behind him, except a few short ejaculatory forms suitable to his present situation."

Dr. Adams had not then received accurate information on this subject: for [in the interval between these two visits to Oxford, and indeed, within a very few days of the last, Dr. Johnson appears to have put to paper some preparatory notes on this subject. In Mr. Anderdon's MSS. is the following paper: ED.

"PRECES.

" —— Against the incursion of evil thoughts. And. MSS.
" —— Repentance and pardon—*Laud.*
" —— In disease.
" —— On the loss of friends—by death; by his own fault or friend's.
" —— On the unexpected notice of the death of others.

" Prayer generally recommendatory;
" To understand their prayers;
" Under dread of death;
" Prayer commonly considered as a stated and temporary duty—performed and forgotten—without any effect on the following day.
" Prayer—a vow.—*Taylor.*

" SCEPTICISM CAUSED BY

" 1. Indifference about opinions.
" 2. Supposition that things disputed are disputable.
" 3. Demand of unsuitable evidence.
" 4. False judgment of evidence.
" 5. Complaint of the obscurity of Scripture.
" 6. Contempt of fathers and of authority.
" 7. Absurd method of learning objections first.
" 8. Study not for truth, but vanity.
" 9. Sensuality and a vicious life.
" 10. False honour, false shame.
" 11. Omission of prayer and religious exercises.—*Oct.* 31, 1784."

The first part of these notes seems to be a classification of prayers; the two latter, hints for the *discourse* on prayer which he intended to prefix.] ED.

It has since appeared that various prayers had been composed by him at different

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the publication of this work, that Mr. Hector has survived his illustrious school-fellow so many years; that he still retains his health and spirits; and has gratified me with the following acknowledgment: "I thank you, most sincerely thank you, for the great and long-continued entertainment your life of Dr. Johnson has afforded me, and others of my particular friends." Mr. Hector, besides setting me right as to the verses on a Sprig of Myrtle, (see vol. i. p. 33, note) has favoured me with two English odes, written by Dr. Johnson at an early period of his life, which will appear in my edition of his poems.—BOSWELL. This early and worthy friend of Johnson died at Birmingham, 2d September, 1794.—MALONE.

[1] This amiable and excellent man survived Dr. Johnson about four years, having died in January, 1789, at Gloucester, where a monument is erected to his memory with the following inscription:—

Sacred to the memory of WILLIAM ADAMS, D. D. Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, Prebendary of this Cathedral, and Archdeacon of Llandaff. Ingenious, learned, eloquent, he ably defended the truth of Christianity; pious, benevolent, and charitable, he successfully inculcated its sacred precepts. Pure, and undeviating in his own conduct, he was tender and compassionate to the failings of others. Ever anxious for the welfare and happiness of mankind, he was on all occasions forward to encourage works of public utility and extensive beneficence. In the government of the college over which he presided, his vigilant attention was uniformly exerted to promote the important objects of the institution: whilst the mild dignity of his deportment, his gentleness of disposition and urbanity of manners, inspired esteem, gratitude, and affection. Full of days, and matured in virtue, he died Jan. 13th, 1789, aged 82.

A very just character of Dr. Adams may also be found in "The Gentleman's Magazine" for 1789, vol. lix. p. 214. —MALONE.

periods, which, intermingled with pious resolutions and some short notes of his life, were entitled by him "Prayers and Meditations," and have, in pursuance of his earnest requisition, in the hopes of doing good, been published, with a judicious well-written preface, by the Reverend Mr. Strahan, to whom he delivered them. This admirable collection, to which I have frequently referred in the course of this work, evinces, beyond all his compositions for the publick, and all the eulogies of his friends and admirers, the sincere virtue and piety of Johnson. It proves with unquestionable authenticity that, amidst all his constitutional infirmities, his earnestness to conform his practice to the precepts of christianity was unceasing, and that he habitually endeavoured to refer every transaction of his life to the will of the Supreme Being [1].

He arrived in London on the 16th of November, and next day sent to Dr. Burney the following note, which I insert as the last token of his remembrance of that ingenious and amiable man, and as another of the many proofs of the tenderness and benignity of his heart:

"Dr. Johnson, who came home last night, sends his respects to dear Dr. Burney and all the dear Burneys, little and great."

"TO MR. HECTOR, IN BIRMINGHAM.

"London, 17th Nov. 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I did not reach Oxford until Friday morning, and then I sent Francis to see the balloon fly, but could not go myself. I staid at Oxford till Tuesday, and then came in the common vehicle easily to London. I am as I was, and having seen Dr. Brocklesby, am to ply the squills; but, whatever be their efficacy, this world must soon pass away. Let us think seriously on our duty. I send my kindest respects to dear Mrs. Careless: let me have the prayers of both. We have all lived long, and must soon part. God have mercy on us for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON.

His correspondence with me, after his letter on the subject of my settling in London, shall now, so far as is proper, be produced in one series.

July 26 he wrote to me from Ashbourne

"On the 14th I came to Lichfield, and found every body glad enough to see me. On the 20th I came hither, and found a house half-built, of very uncomfortable appearance; but my own room has not been altered. That a man worn with diseases, in his seventy-second or third year, should condemn part of his remaining life to pass among ruins and rubbish, and that no inconsiderable part, appears to me very strange. I know that your kindness makes you impatient to know the state of my health, in which I cannot boast of much improvement. I came through the journey without much inconvenience, but when I attempt self-motion I find my legs weak, and my breath very short: this day I have been much disordered. I have no company; the doctor [2] is busy in his fields, and goes to bed at nine, and his whole system is so different from mine, that we seem formed for different elements; I have, therefore, all my amusement to seek within myself."

Having written to him in bad spirits a letter filled with dejection and fretfulness [3],

[1] [There are some errors in the foregoing statement relative to the *Prayers and Meditations*, which, considering the effect of that publication on Dr. Johnson's character, and Mr. Boswell's zealous claims to accuracy in all such matters, are rather strange. Indeed it seems as if Mr. Boswell had read either too hastily or not at all the preface of Dr. Strahan's book. In the first place, as has been already stated (*ante*, preface and vol. i. p. 97), this *collection* was not, as Mr. Boswell seems to suppose, made by *Dr. Johnson* himself; nor did *he* give it the designation of "*Prayers and Meditations;*" nor do the original papers bear any appearance of having been intended for the press—quite the contrary! Dr. Strahan's preface indeed is not so clear on this point as it ought to have been; but even from it we learn that whatever Johnson's *intentions* were as to revising and collecting for publication his scattered prayers, he in fact did nothing but place a confused mass of papers in Dr. Strahan's hands, and from the inspection of the papers themselves it is quite evident that Dr. Strahan thought proper to weave into one work materials that were never intended to come together. This consideration is important, because, as has been before observed but cannot be too often repeated, the *prayers* are mixed up with notices and memoranda of Dr. Johnson's conduct and thoughts (called *by Dr. Strahan*, "*Meditations*"), which, affecting and edifying as they may be when read as the secret effusions of a good man's conscience, would have a very different character if they could be supposed to be left behind him ostentatiously *prepared for publication.*—ED.]

[2] The Reverend Dr. Taylor.—BOSWELL.

[3] [Dr. Johnson and others of Mr. Boswe..'s friends used to disbelieve and therefore ridicule his mental inquietudes—that "*Jemmy Boswell*" should be afflicted with *melancholy* was what none of his acquaintance could imagine, and as he seemed sometimes to make a parade of these miseries, they thought he was aping Dr. Johnson, who was admitted to be really a sufferer, though *he* endeavoured to conceal it. But after all, there can be no doubt that Mr. Boswell was liable to great inequalities of spirits, which will account for many of the peculiarities of his character, and should induce us to pity what his cotemporaries laughed at.—ED.]

and at the same time expressing anxious apprehensions concerning him, on account of a dream which had disturbed me; his answer was chiefly in terms of reproach, for a supposed charge of "affecting discontent, and indulging the vanity of complaint." It, however, proceeded,

"Write to me often, and write like a man. I consider your fidelity and tenderness as a great part of the comforts which are yet left me, and sincerely wish we could be nearer to each other. *******. My dear friend, life is very short and very uncertain; let us spend it as well as we can. My worthy neighbour, Allen, is dead. Love me as well as you can. Pay my respects to dear Mrs. Boswell. Nothing ailed me at that time; let your superstition at last have an end."

Feeling very soon that the manner in which he had written might hurt me, he, two days afterwards, wrote to me again, giving me an account of his sufferings; after which he thus proceeds:

"28th July.

"Before this letter you will have had one which I hope you will not take amiss; for it contains only truth, and that truth kindly intended. ******* *Spartam quam nactus es orna;* make the most and best of your lot, and compare yourself not with the few that are above you, but with the multitudes which are below you. ******. Go steadily forwards with lawful business or honest diversions. 'Be,' as Temple says of the Dutchmen, 'well when you are not ill, and pleased when you are not angry.' *****. This may seem but an ill return for your tenderness; but I mean it well, for I love you with great ardour and sincerity. Pay my respects to dear Mrs. Boswell, and teach the young ones to love me."

I unfortunately was so much indisposed during a considerable part of the year, that it was not, or at least I thought it was not in my power to write to my illustrious friend as formerly, or without expressing such complaints as offended him. Having conjured him not to do me the injustice of charging me with affectation, I was with much regret long silent. His last letter to me then came, and affected me very tenderly:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
"Lichfield, 5th November, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have this summer sometimes amended, and sometimes relapsed, but, upon the whole, have lost ground very much. My legs are extremely weak, and my breath very short, and the water is now increasing upon me. In this uncomfortable state your letters used to relieve: what is the reason that I have them no longer? Are you sick, or are you sullen? Whatever be the reason, if it be less than necessity, drive it away; and of the short life that we have, make the best use for yourself and for your friends. ******. I am sometimes afraid that your omission to write has some real cause, and shall be glad to know that you are not sick, and that nothing ill has befallen dear Mrs. Boswell, or any of your family. I am, sir, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Yet it was not a little painful to me to find, that in a paragraph of this letter, which I have omitted, he still persevered in arraigning me as before, which was strange in him who had so much experience of what I suffered. I, however, wrote to him two as kind letters as I could; the last of which came too late to be read by him, for his illness increased more rapidly upon him than I had apprehended; but I had the consolation of being informed that he spoke of me on his death-bed with affection, and I look forward with humble hope of renewing our friendship in a better world.

I now relieve the readers of this work from any farther personal notice of its authour; who, if he should be thought to have obtruded himself too much upon their attention, requests them to consider the peculiar plan of his biographical undertaking.

Soon after Johnson's return to the metropolis, both the asthma and dropsy became more violent and distressful. He had for some time kept a journal in Latin of the state of his illness, and the remedies which he used, under the title of *Ægri Ephemeris*, which he began on the 6th of July, but continued it no longer than the 8th of November; finding, I suppose, that it was a mournful and unavailing register. It is in my possession; and is written with great care and accuracy.

Still his love of literature[1] did not fail. A very few days before his death he trans-

[1] It is truly wonderful to consider the extent and constancy of Johnson's literary ardour, notwithstanding the melancholy which clouded and embittered his existence. Besides the numerous and various works which he executed, he had, at different times, formed schemes of a great many more, of which the following catalogue was given by him to Mr. Langton, and by that gentleman presented to his Majesty.—BOSWELL. [This *catalogue*, as Mr. Boswell calls it, is, by Dr. Johnson himself, intitled "DESIGNS," and is written in a few pages of a small duodecimo notebook bound in rough calf. It seems from the hand, that it was written early in life: from the marginal dates it appears that some portions were added in 1752 and 1755. In the first page

mitted to his friend, Mr. John Nichols, a list of the authours of the Universal History, mentioning their several shares in that work. It has, according to his direction, been deposited in the British Museum, and is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1784.[1]

During his sleepless nights he amused himself by translating into Latin verse, from the Greek, many of the epigrams in the "Anthologia." These translations, with some other poems by him in Latin, he gave to his friend Mr. Langton, who, having added a few notes, sold them to the booksellers for a small sum to be given to some of Johnson's relations, which was accordingly done; and they are printed in the collection of his works.

A very erroneous notion has circulated as to Johnson's deficiency in the knowledge of the Greek language, partly owing to the modesty[2] with which, from knowing how much there was to be learnt, he used to mention his own comparative acquisitions. When Mr. Cumberland[3] talked to him of

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of this little volume, his late Majesty King George III. wrote *with his own hand:*

"*Original Manuscripts*
of Dr. Samuel Johnson,
presented by his friend,
—— *Langton, Esq.*
April 16th, 1785
G. R"

It nas been thought more convenient to transfer this catalogue to the appendix.—Ed.]

[1] As the letter accompanying this list (which fully supports the observation in the text) was written but a week before Dr. Johnson's death, the reader may not be displeased to find it here preserved:

"TO MR. NICHOLS.

"6th December, 1784.

"The late learned Mr. Swinton, having one day remarked that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper authours, at the request of Sir Robert Chambers, or of myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you in his own hand; being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

"I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum, that the veracity of this account may never be doubted. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. S——n.

7 → History of the
—— Carthaginians.
—— Numidians.
—— Mauritanians.
—— Gætulians.
—— Garamanthes.
—— Melano Gætulians.
—— Nigritæ.
—— Cyrenaica.
—— Marmarica.
—— Regio Syrtica.
—— Turks, Tartars, and Moguls.
—— Indians.
—— Chinese.
Dissertation on the peopling of America.
—— independency of the Arabs.
The Cosmogony, and a small part of the History immediately following; by Mr. Sale.
To the birth of Abraham; chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.
History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards; by Mr. Psalmanazar.
Xenophon's Retreat; by the same.
History of the Persians and the Constantinopolitan Empire; by Dr. Campbell.
History of the Romans; by Mr. Bower.—Boswell. [Bishop Warburton, in a letter to Jortin, in 1749, speaks with great contempt of this work as "miserable trash," and "the infamous rhapsody called the Universal History." *Nich. Anec.* vol. ii. p. 173. But Mr. Gibbon's more favourable opinion of this work will, as Mr. Markland observes, claim as much attention as the "decrees" of Warburton, who has not improperly been termed by the former "the dictator and tyrant of the world of literature." Gibbon speaks of the "excellence of the first part of the Universal History as generally admitted." The History of the Macedonians, he also observes, "is executed with much erudition, taste, and judgment. This history would be invaluable were all its parts of the same merit."—*Miscel. Works*, v. 411, 428. Some curious facts relating to this work, and especially those parts of it committed to himself, will be found in Psalmanazar's Memoirs, p. 291.—Ed.]

[On the subject of Dr. Johnson's skill in Greek, the Editor has great pleasure in quoting an anecdote told by his dear and lamented friend, the late Mr. Gifford, in his Life of Ford: "My friend the late Lord Grosvenor had a house at Salt-hill, where I usually spent a part of the summer, and thus became acquainted with that great and good man Jacob Bryant. Here the conversation turned one morning on a Greek criticism by Dr. Johnson in some volume lying on the table, which I ventured (*for I was then young*) to deem incorrect, and pointed it out to him. I could not help thinking that he was something of my opinion, but he was cautious and reserved. 'But, sir,' said I, willing to overcome his scruples, 'Dr. Johnson himself admitted that he was not a good Greek scholar.' 'Sir,' he replied with a serious and impressive air, 'it is not easy for us to say what such a man as Johnson would call a good Greek scholar.' I hope that I profited by that lesson—certainly I never forgot it." Gifford's Works of Ford, vol. i. p. lxii.—Ed.]

[3] Mr. Cumberland assures me, that he was always treated with great courtesy by Dr. Johnson, who, in his "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," vol. ii. p. 68, thus speaks of that learned, ingenious, and accomplished gentleman: "The want of company is a ninconvenience, but Mr. Cumberland is a million."—Boswell. [The following is Mr. Cumberland's own evidence on the points alluded to by Mr. Boswell: "In quickness of intellect few ever equalled him; in profundity of

the Greek fragments which are so well illustrated in "The Observer," and of the Greek dramatists in general, he candidly acknowledged his insufficiency in that particular branch of Greek literature. Yet it may be said, that though not a great, he was a good Greek scholar. Dr. Charles Burney, the younger, who is universally acknowledged by the best judges to be one of the few men of this age who are very eminent for their skill in that noble language, has assured me, that Johnson could give a Greek word for almost every English one; and that although not sufficiently conversant in the niceties of the language, he, upon some occasions, discovered, even in these, a considerable degree of critical acumen. Mr. Dalzel, professor of Greek at Edinburgh, whose skill is unquestionable, mentioned to me in very liberal terms, the impression which was made upon him by Johnson, in a conversation which they had in London concerning that language. As Johnson, therefore, was undoubtedly one of the first Latin scholars in modern times, let us not deny to his fame some additional splendour from Greek [1].

[Even Mrs. Piozzi used to think Dr. Johnson more free than prudent in professing so loudly his little skill in the Greek language: for though he considered it as a proof of a narrow mind to be too careful of literary reputation [2], yet no man could be more enraged than he, if an enemy, taking advantage of this confession, twitted him with his ignorance. When the King of Denmark was in England [3], one of his noblemen was brought by Mr. Colman to see Dr. Johnson at Mr. Thrale's country-house; and having heard, he said, that he was not famous for Greek literature, attacked him on the weak side; politely adding, that he chose that conversation on purpose to favour himself. Dr. Johnson, however, displayed so copious a knowledge of authours, books, and every branch of learning in that language, that the gentleman appeared astonished. When he was gone, Johnson said, "Now for all this triumph I may thank Thrale's Xenophon here, as, I think, excepting that *one*, I have not looked in a Greek book these ten years; but see what haste my dear friends were all in," continued he, "to tell this poor innocent foreigner that I knew nothing of Greek! Oh no! he knows nothing of Greek!" with a loud burst of laughing [4].]

Piozzi, p. 41.

Johnson's affection for his departed relations seemed to grow warmer as he approached nearer to the time when he might hope to see them again. It probably appeared to him that he should upbraid himself with unkind inattention, were he to leave the world without having paid a tribute of respect to their memory.

"TO MR. GREEN, APOTHECARY, AT LICHFIELD [5].

"2nd December, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have enclosed the epitaph for my father, mother, and brother, to be all engraved on the large size, and laid in the middle aisle in St. Michael's church, which I request the clergyman and churchwardens to permit.

"The first care must be to find the exact place of interment, that the stone may protect the bodies. Then let the stone be deep, massy, and hard; and do not let the difference of ten pounds, or more, defeat our purpose.

"I have enclosed ten pounds, and Mrs. Porter will pay you ten more, which I gave her for the same purpose. What more is wanted shall be sent; and I beg that all possible haste may be made, for I wish to have it done while I am yet alive. Let me know, dear sir, that you receive this. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD [6].

"2d December, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am very ill, and desire your prayers. I have sent Mr. Green

erudition many have surpassed him. I do not think he had a pure and classical taste, nor was apt to be best pleased with the best authours, but as a general scholar he ranks very high. When I would have consulted him upon certain points of literature, whilst I was making my collections from the Greek dramatists for my essays in the Observer, he candidly acknowledged that his studies had not lain amongst them; and certain it is there is very little show of literature in his Ramblers; and in the passage where he quotes Aristotle he has not correctly given the meaning of the original: but this was merely the result of haste and inattention. Neither is he so to be measured, for he had so many parts and properties of scholarship about him, that you can only fairly review him as a man of general knowledge."—*Cumberland's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 361.—ED.]

[1] [In this place Mr. Boswell had introduced extracts from cotemporary writers whom he supposed to have imitated Johnson's style, which it has been thought convenient to transpose to the end of the Life.—ED.]

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi would probably have expressed Johnson's sentiments more correctly if she had said, "He considered it a proof of a narrow mind to pretend to learning which one did not really possess."—ED.]

[3] [In 1768.—ED.]

[4] [It has been said that Dr. Johnson never exerted such steady application as he did for the last ten years of his life in the study of Greek.—ED.]

[5] [A relation of Dr. Johnson]. *Ante*, p. 44 —BOSWELL.

[6] This lady, whose name so frequently occurs

the epitaph, and a power to call on you for ten pounds.

"I laid this summer a stone over Tetty, in the chapel of Bromley in Kent. The inscription is in Latin [1], of which this is the English. (Here a translation.)

"That this is done, I thought it fit that you should know. What care will be taken of us, who can tell? May God pardon and bless us, for Jesus Christ's sake. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

My readers are now, at last, to behold SAMUEL JOHNSON preparing himself for that doom, from which the most exalted powers afford no exemption to man. Death had always been to him an object of terrour; so that, though by no means happy, he still clung to life with an eagerness at which many have wondered. At any time when he was ill, he was very much pleased to be told that he looked better. An ingenious member of the *Eumelian Club* [2] informs me, that upon one occasion, when he said to him that he saw health returning to his cheek, Johnson seized him by the hand and exclaimed, "Sir, you are one of the kindest friends I ever had."

His own statement of his views of futurity will appear truly rational; and may, perhaps, impress the unthinking with seriousness.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 3.

"You know," says he [3] to Mrs. Thrale, "I never thought confidence with respect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wise, or a good man. Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing; wisdom impresses strongly the consciousness of those faults, of which it is, perhaps, itself an aggravation; and goodness, always wishing to be better, and imputing every deficience to criminal negligence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to suppose the condition of forgiveness fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime supplied by penitence.

"This is the state of the best; but what must be the condition of him whose heart will not suffer him to rank himself among the best, or among the good? Such must be his dread of the approaching trial, as will leave him little attention to the opinion of those whom he is leaving for ever; and the serenity that is not felt, it can be no virtue to feign.

His great fear of death [4], and the strange dark manner in which Sir John Hawkins [5] imparts the uneasiness which he expressed on account of offences with which he charged himself, may give occasion to injurious suspicions, as if there had been something of more than ordinary criminality weighing upon his conscience. On that account, therefore, as well as from the regard to truth which he inculcated [6], I am to mention (with all possible respect and delicacy, however), that his conduct, after he came to London, and had associated with Savage and others, was not so strictly virtuous, in one respect, as when he was a younger man. It was well known that his amorous inclinations were uncommonly strong and impetuous. He owned to many of his friends, that he used to take women of the town to taverns, and hear them relate their history.—In short, it must not be

in the course of this work, survived Dr. Johnson just thirteen months. She died at Lichfield, in her 71st year, January 13, 1786, and bequeathed the principal part of her fortune to the Rev. Mr. Pearson, of Lichfield.—MALONE.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 100.—ED.]

[2] A club in London, founded by the learned and ingenious physician, Dr. Ash, in honour of whose name it was called *Eumelian* [literally, *well-ashed*], from the Greek Ευμελιας: though it was warmly contended, and even put to a vote, that it should have the more obvious appellation of *Fraxinean*, from the Latin.—BOSWELL.

[3] Mrs. Thrale's Collection, 10th March, 1784. —BOSWELL.

[4] Mrs. Carter, in one of her letters to Mrs. Montague, says, "I see by the papers, that Dr. Johnson is dead. In extent of learning, and exquisite purity of moral writing, he has left no superiour, and I fear very few equals. His virtues and his piety were founded on the steadiest of Christian principles and faith. His faults, I firmly believe, arose from the irritations of a most suffering state of nervous constitution, which scarcely ever allowed him a moment's ease."—BOSWELL. [She adds, "You wonder 'that an undoubted believer and a man of piety should be afraid of death;' but it is such characters who have ever the deepest sense of their imperfections and deviations from the rule of duty, of which the very best must be conscious; and such a temper of mind as is struck with awe and humility at the prospect of the last solemn sentence appears much better suited to the wretched deficiencies of the best human performances than the thoughtless security that rushes undisturbed into eternity."—*Miss Carter's Life*, vol. ii. p. 166.

To this passage the editor of Mrs. Carter's Letters subjoins:

"Mrs. Carter told the editor, that in one of the last conversations which she had with this eminent moralist, she told him that she had never known him say any thing contrary to the principles of the Christian religion. He seized her hand with great emotion, exclaiming, 'You know this, and bear witness to it when I am gone!' "—*Mrs. Carter's Letters to Mrs. Montague*, vol. iii. p. 234—ED.]

[5] [Again the Editor is obliged to say, that he can see nothing more *strange* or *dark* in Haw kins's expressions than in Mr. Boswell's—nay, than in Dr. Johnson's own.—ED.]

[6] See what he said to Mr. Malone, *ante*, p 274.—BOSWELL.

concealed, that like many other good and pious men, among whom we may place the apostle Paul upon his own authority, Johnson was not free from propensities which were ever "warring against the law of his mind,"—and that in his combats with them, he was sometimes overcome[1].

Here let the profane and licentious pause; let them not thoughtlessly say that Johnson was an *hypocrite*, or that his *principles* were not firm, because his *practice* was not uniformly conformable to what he professed.

Let the question be considered independent of moral and religious associations; and no man will deny that thousands, in many instances, act against conviction. Is a prodigal, for example, an *hypocrite*, when he owns he is satisfied that his extravagance will bring him to ruin and misery? We are *sure* he *believes* it; but immediate inclination, strengthened by indulgence, prevails over that belief in influencing his conduct. Why then shall credit be refused to the *sincerity* of those who acknowledge their persuasion of moral and religious duty, yet sometimes fail of living as it requires? I heard Dr. Johnson once observe, "There is something noble in publishing truth, though it condemns one's self[2]." And one who said in his presence, "he had no notion of people being in earnest in their good professions, whose practice was not suitable to them," was thus reprimanded by him:—"Sir, are you so grossly ignorant of human nature as not to know that a may be very sincere in good principles, without having good practice[3]?"

But let no man encourage or soothe himself in "presumptuous sin," from knowing that Johnson was sometimes hurried into indulgences which he thought criminal. I have exhibited this circumstance as a shade in so great a character, both from my sacred love of truth, and to show that he was not so weakly scrupulous[4] as he has been represented by those who imagine that the sins, of which a deep sense was upon his mind, were merely such little venial trifles as pouring milk into his tea on Good-Friday. His understanding will be defended by my statement, if his consistency of conduct be in some degree impaired. But what wise man would, for momentary gratifications, deliberately subject himself to suffer such uneasiness as we find was experienced by Johnson, in reviewing his conduct as compared with his notion of the ethicks of the gospel? Let the following passages be kept in emembrance:

"O God, giver and preserver of all life, by whose power I was created, and by whose providence I am sustained, look down upon me with tenderness and mercy; grant that I may not have been created to be finally destroyed; that I may not be preserved to add wickedness to wickedness." Prayers & Med.

"O Lord, let me not sink into total depravity; look down upon me, and rescue me at last from the captivity of sin."

"Almighty and most merciful Father, who hath continued my life from year to year, grant that by longer life I may become less desirous of sinful pleasures, and more careful of eternal happiness."

"Let not my years be multiplied to increase my guilt; but as my age advances, let me become more pure in my thoughts, more regular in my desires, and more obedient to thy laws."

"Forgive, O merciful Lord, whatever I have done contrary to thy laws. Give me such a sense of my wickedness as may pro-

[1] [Surely Mr. Boswell might have been forgiven if he had not revived these stories, which, whether true or false originally, were near fifty years old. He had already said (*ante*, vol. i. p. 66) quite enough, and perhaps more than he was *authorized* to say, on this topic. The reader will recollect that it has been shown (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 47. 65 and 66, *n.*) that the duration, and probably the intensity, of Dr. Johnson's intimacy with Savage have been greatly exaggerated, and so, no doubt, have been the supposed consequences of that intimacy. The Editor does not wish to enter into more *detail* on this disagreeable subject, but his "*regard for truth*" obliges him to declare his opinion, that Mr. Boswell's introduction of this topic, his pretended candour, and hollow defence, were unwarranted by any evidence, and are the most, indeed almost the only, discreditable points of his whole work.—Ed.]

[2] Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, vol. i. p. 391. On the same subject, in his letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated November 29, 1783, he makes the following just observation: "Life, to be worthy of a rational being, must be always in progression; we must always purpose to do more or better than in time past. The mind is enlarged and elevated by mere purposes, though they end as they began, by airy contemplation. We compare and judge, though we do not practise" Boswell.

[3] Ibid, vol. ii. p. 247

[4] [In one of the manuscripts communicated by Mr. Anderdon there is a note, dated in 1784, by which it appears that Johnson was aware that he was sometimes over scrupulous, for it records a resolution "to endeavour to conquer *scruples*." These *scruples*, which have been so unfeelingly exposed to the world, ought at least to have relieved him from these imputations which Mr. Boswell *alone* has raised against him. He cannot be supposed to have been minutely scrupulous about *trifles* while habitually guilty of *crimes*. and the Editor must repeat, that the conscientious sincerity of Johnson's self-confessions, and the long period over which they extend, ought alone to have sufficed to repel such insinuations. And it ought to be recollected, that Mr. Boswell, who revives this antiquated scandal was yet very indignant with Mrs. Piozzi for telling an unfavourable story of a momentary *rudeness* to Mr Cholmondeley See *ante*, p. 410, *n.*—Ed

duce true contrition and effectual repentance: so that when I shall be called into another state, I may be received among the sinners to whom sorrow and reformation have obtained pardon, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Such was the distress of mind, such the penitence of Johnson, in his hours of privacy, and in his devout approaches to his Maker. His *sincerity*, therefore, must appear to every candid mind unquestionable.

It is of essential consequence to keep in view, that there was in this excellent man's conduct no false principle of *commutation*, no *deliberate* indulgence in sin, in consideration of a counterbalance of duty. His offending and his repenting were distinct and separate [1]: and when we consider his almost unexampled attention to truth, his inflexible integrity, his constant piety, who will dare to "cast a stone at him?" Besides, let it never be forgotten that he cannot be charged with any offence indicating badness of *heart*, any thing dishonest, base, or malignant; but that, on the contrary, he was charitable in an extraordinary degree: so that even in one of his own rigid judgments of himself (Easter-eve, 1781), while he says, "I have corrected no external habits;" he is obliged to own, "I hope that since my last communion I have advanced, by pious reflections, in my submission to God, and my benevolence to man."

I am conscious that this is the most difficult and dangerous part of my biographical work, and I cannot but be very anxious concerning it. I trust that I have got through it, preserving at once my regard to truth,—to my friend,—and to the interests of virtue and religion. Nor can I apprehend that more harm can ensue from the knowledge of the irregularities of Johnson, guarded as I have stated it, than from knowing that Addison and Parnell were intemperate in the use of wine; which he himself, in his Lives of those celebrated writers and pious men, has not forborne to record [2].

It is not my intention to give a very minute detail of the particulars of Johnson's remaining days [3], of whom it was now evident, that the crisis was fast approaching when he must "*die like men, and fall like one of the princes.*" Yet it will be instructive, as well as gratifying to the curiosity of my readers, to record a few circumstances, on the authenticity of which they may perfectly rely, as I have been at the utmost pains to obtain an accurate account of his last illness, from the best authority. 82d Ps. v. 7.

Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Warren, and Dr. Butter, physicians, generously attended him, without accepting any fees, as did Mr. Cruikshank, surgeon; and all that could be done from professional skill and ability was tried, to prolong a life so truly valuable. He himself, indeed, having, on account of his very bad constitution, been perpetually applying himself to medical inquiries, united his own efforts with those of the gentlemen who attended him; and imagining that the dropsical collection of water which oppressed him might be drawn off by making incisions in his body, he, with his usual resolute defiance of pain, cut deep, when he thought that his surgeon had done it too tenderly [4].

About eight or ten days before his death, when Dr. Brocklesby paid him his morning

[1] Dr. Johnson related, with very earnest approbation, a story of a gentleman, who, in an impulse of passion, overcame the virtue of a young woman. When she said to him, "I am afraid we have done wrong!" he answered, "Yes, we have done wrong;—for I would not *debauch her mind.*"—BOSWELL.

[2] [Mr. Boswell makes here a poor and disingenuous defence for a very grievous error. It is one thing to *repeat*—as Dr. Johnson did, *historically*, what all the world knew, and few were inclined to blame seriously—that Parnell and Addison loved a cheerful glass—

"Narratur et prisci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus."

But it is quite *another thing* to insinuate oneself into a man's confidence, to follow him for twenty years like his shadow, to note his words and actions like a spy, to ransack his most secret papers, and scrutinize even his conscientious confessions, and *then*, with all the sinister authority which such a show of friendship must confer, to accuse him of low and filthy guilt *supposed* to have been committed a quarter of a century before the informer and his calumniated friend had ever met, and which, consequently, Mr. Boswell could only have had from hearsay or from guess, and which all personal testimony and all the documentary evidence seem to disprove. Surely Mr. Boswell's good sense, good taste, and good feeling, must have, on this occasion, given way under some powerful *self-delusion.*—ED.]

[3] [The particulars which Mr. Boswell's absence, and the jealousy between him and some of Johnson's other friends, prevented *his* being able to give, the Editor is now at liberty to supply from Hawkins's work, as well as from an interesting journal of Mr. Windham's.—ED.]

[4] This bold experiment Sir John Hawkins has related in such a manner as to suggest a charge against Johnson of intentionally hastening his end a charge so very inconsistent with his character in every respect, that it is injurious even to refute it, as Sir John has thought it necessary to do. It is evident, that what Johnson did in hopes of relief indicated an extraordinary eagerness to retard his dissolution.—BOSWELL. [If Sir J. Hawkins, whose account the reader will presently see (*post* p. 446), makes rather too much of this singular incident, surely Mr. Boswell treats too lightly the morbid impatience which induced Dr. Johnson to take the lancet into his own hands.—ED.]

visit, he seemed very low and desponding, and said, "I have been as a dying man all night." He then emphatically broke out in the words of Shakspeare,

"Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,
Which weighs upon the heart?"
MACB. ACT V. SC. 3.

To which Dr. Brocklesby readily answered from the same great poet:

"——————— Therein the patient
Must minister to himself."

Johnson expressed himself much satisfied with the application.

On another day after this, when talking on the subject of prayer, Dr. Brocklesby repeated from Juvenal,

"Orandum est, ut sit mens sana in corpore sano,"
SAT. X. V. 356.

and so on to the end of the tenth satire; but in running it quickly over, he happened, in the line,

"Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat[1],"

to pronounce *supremum* for *extremum;* at which Johnson's critical ear instantly took offence, and discoursing vehemently on the unmetrical effect of such a lapse, he showed himself as full as ever of the spirit of the grammarian.

Having no other relations[2], it had been for some time Johnson's intention to make a liberal provision for his faithful servant, Mr. Francis Barber, whom he looked upon as particularly under his protection, and whom he had all along treated truly as an humble friend. Having asked Dr. Brocklesby what would be a proper annuity to a favourite servant, and being answered that it must depend on the circumstances of the master; and that in the case of a nobleman fifty pounds a year was considered as an adequate reward for many years' faithful service;—"Then," said Johnson, "shall I be *nobilissimus*, for I mean to leave Frank seventy pounds a year, and I desire you to tell him so." It is strange, however, to think, that Johnson was not free from that general weakness of being averse to execute a will, so that he delayed it from time to time; and had it not been for Sir John Hawkins's repeatedly urging it, I think it is probable that his kind resolution would not have been fulfilled[3].

["After the declaration he had made of his intention to provide for his servant Frank," says Sir J. Hawkins, "and before his going into the country, I had frequently pressed him to make a will, and had gone so far as to make a draft of one, with blanks for the names of the executors and residuary legatee, and directing in what manner it was to be executed and attested; but he was exceedingly averse to this business; and, while he was in Derbyshire, I repeated my solicitations, for this purpose, by letters. When Dr. Johnson arrived in town, he had done nothing in it, and, to what I formerly said, I now added, that he had never mentioned the disposal of the residue of his estate, which, after the purchase of an annuity for Frank, would be something considerable, and that he would do well to bequeath it to his relations. His answer was, 'I care not what becomes of the residue.' A few days after, it appeared that he had executed the draft, the blanks remaining, with all the solemnities of a real

Hawk p. 575

[1] [Mr. Boswell has omitted to notice *the* line, for the sake of which Dr. Brocklesby probably introduced the quotation,

"Fortem posce animum et *mortis terrore carentem!*"

[2] The authour in a former page has shown the injustice of Sir John Hawkins's charge against Johnson, with respect to a person of the name of Heely, whom he has inaccurately represented as a relation of Johnson's. See p. 423. That Johnson was anxious to discover whether any of his relations were living, is evinced by the following letter, written not long before he made his will:

"TO THE REV. DR. VYSE, IN LAMBETH.

"SIR,—"I am desirous to know whether Charles Scrimshaw, of Woodsease (I think), in your father's neighbourhood, be now living; what is his condition, and where he may be found. If you can conveniently make any inquiry about him, and can do it without delay, it will be an act of great kindness to me, he being very nearly related to me. I beg [you] to pardon this trouble.

"I am, sir, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street,
Nov. 29, 1784."

In conformity to the wish expressed in the preceding letter, an inquiry was made, but no descendants of Charles Scrimshaw or of his sisters, were discovered to be living. Dr. Vyse informs me, that Dr. Johnson told him, "he was disappointed in the inquiries he had made after his relations." There is therefore no ground whatsoever for supposing that he was unmindful of them, or neglected them.—MALONE. [Surely Mr. Malone's conclusion is rather too strong, when his premises show that Dr. Johnson had so long and so utterly neglected these relatives, that when, within a month of his death, he set about inquiring after them, all traces of their existence had vanished.—ED.]

[3] [Here followed in a note Dr. Johnson's will, which, as well as some subsequent paragraphs of Mr. Boswell's work, the Editor has transposed, for the sake of what seems to him a better order.—ED.]

will. I could get him no farther, and thus, for some time, the matter rested.

"His complaints still increasing, I continued pressing him to make a will; but he still procrastinated that business. On the 27th of November, in the morning, I went to his house, with a purpose still farther to urge him not to give occasion, by dying intestate, for litigation among his relations; but finding that he was gone to pass the day with the Rev. Mr. Strahan, at Islington, I followed him thither, and found there our old friend Mr. Ryland, and Mr. Hoole. Upon my sitting down, he said, that the prospect of the change he was about to undergo, and the thought of meeting his Saviour, troubled him, but that he had hope that he would not reject him. I then began to discourse with him about his will, and the provision for Frank, till he grew angry. He told me that he had signed and sealed the paper I left him; but that, said I, had blanks in it, which, as it seems, you have not filled up with the names of the executors. 'You should have filled them up yourself,' answered he. I replied that such an act would have looked as if I meant to prevent his choice of a fitter person. 'Sir,' said he, 'these minor virtues are not to be exercised in matters of such importance as this.' At length, he said, that on his return home he would send for a clerk, and dictate a will to him. You will then, said I, be *inops consilii;* rather do it now. With Mr. Strahan's permission I will be his guest at dinner; and, if Mr. Hoole will please to hold the pen, I will, in a few words, make such a disposition of your estate as you shall direct.' To this he assented; but such a paroxysm of the asthma seized him as prevented our going on. As the fire burned up he found himself relieved, and grew cheerful. 'The fit,' said he 'was very sharp; but I am now easy.' After I had dictated a few lines, I told him that the ancient form of wills contained a profession of the faith of the testator; and that he being a man of eminence for learning and parts, it would afford an illustrious example, and well become him, to make such an explicit declaration of his belief as might obviate all suspicions that he was any other than a Christian. He thanked me for the hint, and, calling for paper, wrote on a slip, that I had in my hand and gave him, the following words:—'I humbly commit to the infinite and eternal goodness of Almighty God my soul polluted with many sins; but, as I hope, purified by repentance, and redeemed, as I trust, by the death of Jesus Christ[1];' and, returning it to me, said, 'This I commit to your custody.'

"Upon my calling on him for directions to proceed, he told me that his father, in the course of his trade of a bookseller, had become bankrupt, and that Mr. William Innys had assisted him with money or credit to continue his business—'This,' said he, 'I consider as an obligation on me to be grateful to his descendants, and I therefore mean to give 200*l.* to his representative.' He then meditated a devise of his house at Lichfield to the corporation of that city for a charitable use; but, it being freehold, he said, 'I cannot live a twelvemonth, and the last statute of mortmain stands in the way: I must, therefore, think of some other disposition of it.' His next consideration was a provision for Frank, concerning the amount whereof I found he had been consulting Dr. Brocklesby, to whom he had put this question, 'What would be a proper annuity to bequeath to a favourite servant?' The doctor answered that the circumstances of the master were the truest measure, and that, in the case of a nobleman, 50*l.* a year was deemed an adequate reward for many years' faithful service. 'Then shall I,' said Johnson, 'be *nobilissimus,* for I mean to leave Frank 70*l.* a year, and I desire you to tell him so.' And now, at the making of the will, a devise, equivalent to such a provision, was therein inserted. The residue of his estate and effects, which took in, though he intended it not, the house at Lichfield, he bequeathed to his executors, in trust for a religious association, which it is needless to describe.

"Having executed the will with the necessary formalities, he would have come home, but being pressed by Mr. and Mrs. Strahan to stay, he consented, and we all dined together. Towards the evening he grew cheerful, and I having promised to take him in my coach, Mr. Strahan and Mr. Ryland would accompany him home. In the way thither he appeared much at ease, and told stories. At eight I set him down, and Mr. Strahan and Mr. Ryland betook themselves to their respective homes."]

The consideration of numerous papers of which he was possessed seems to have struck Johnson's mind with a sudden anxiety, and as they were in great confusion, it is much to be lamented that he had not intrusted some faithful and discreet person with the care and selection of them; instead of which he, in a precipitate manner, burnt

[1] [The will of the other great luminary of that age, Mr. Burke, is throughout strikingly characteristick, and was no doubt chiefly drawn up by himself. Those who revere his memory will read with satisfaction the opening declaration. "First, according to the ancient, good, and laudable custom, *of which my heart and understanding recognize the propriety,* I bequeath my soul to God, hoping for his mercy through the only merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" —MARKLAND.]

large masses of them, with little regard, as I apprehend, to discrimination. Not that I suppose we have thus been deprived of any compositions which he had ever intended for the publick eye; but from what escaped the flames I judge that many curious circumstances, relating both to himself and other literary characters, have perished.

Two very valuable articles, I am sure, we have lost, which were two quarto volumes[1], containing a full, fair, and most particular account of his own life, from his earliest recollection. I owned to him, that having accidentally seen them, I had read a great deal in them; and apologising for the liberty I had taken, asked him if I could help it. He placidly answered, "Why, sir, I do not think you could have helped it." I said that I had, for once in my life, felt half an inclination to commit theft. It had come into my mind to carry off those two volumes, and never see him more. Upon my inquiring how this would have affected him, "Sir," said he, "I believe I should have gone mad[2]."

During his last illness Johnson experienced the steady and kind attachment of his numerous friends. Mr. Hoole has drawn up a narrative[3] of what passed in the visits which he paid him during that time, from the 10th of November to the 13th of December, the day of his death, inclusive, and has favoured me with a perusal of it, with permission to make extracts, which I have done.

Nobody was more attentive to him than Mr. Langton[4], to whom he tenderly said, *Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.* And I think it highly to the honour of Mr. Windham, that his important occupations as an active statesman did not prevent him from paying assiduous respect to the dying sage whom he revered.

Mr. Langton informs me, that "one day he found Mr. Burke and four or five more friends sitting with Johnson. Mr. Burke said to him, 'I am afraid, sir, such a number of us may be oppressive to you.'—'No, sir,' said Johnson, 'it is not so; and I must be in a wretched state indeed when your company would not be a delight to me.' Mr. Burke, in a tremulous voice, expressive of being very tenderly affected, replied, 'My dear sir, you have always been too good to me.' Immediately afterwards he went away. This was the last circumstance in the acquaintance of these two eminent men[5]."

[1] [There can be little doubt that these two quarto volumes were of the same kind as, if they were not actually *transcripts* of, the various little diaries which fell into the hands of Dr. Strahan and others; the strong expression, that he would have "*gone mad*" had they been purloined, confirms the Editor's belief, that Dr. Johnson never could have intended that these diaries should have been published. The Editor is confident that *they* were given to Dr. Strahan inadvertently, Johnson meaning to give the *prayers* alone, and he suspects that it was *by accident* only they escaped destruction on the 1st December.—Ed.]

[2] One of these volumes, Sir John Hawkins informs us, he put into his pocket; for which the excuse he states is, that he meant to preserve it from falling into the hands of a person whom he describes so as to make it sufficiently clear who is meant [Mr. George Steevens]: "having strong reasons," said he, "to suspect that this man might find and make an ill use of the book." Why Sir John should suppose that the gentleman alluded to would act in this manner, he has not thought fit to explain. But what he did was not approved of by Johnson; who, upon being acquainted of it without delay by a friend, expressed great indignation, and warmly insisted on the book being delivered up; and, afterwards, in the supposition of his missing it, without knowing by whom it had been taken, he said, "Sir, I should have gone out of the world distrusting half mankind." Sir John next day wrote a letter to Johnson, assigning reasons for his conduct; upon which Johnson observed to Mr. Langton, "Bishop Sanderson could not have dictated a better letter. I could almost say, *Melius est sic perituisse quam non errâsse.*" The agitation into which Johnson was thrown by this incident probably made him hastily burn those precious records which must ever be regretted.—Boswell. [We shall see presently, in Hawkins's diary (1st and 5th December), more on the subject: but it is *not* certain that the volume which Hawkins took was one of these two quartos; and it *is* certain that a destruction of papers took place a day or two before that event. Johnson had really some reason for "distrusting mankind," when, of two dear friends, he found one half-inclined to commit a theft, and another more than half-committing it Bishop Sanderson is referred to, because he was an eminent casuist, and treated of cases of conscience.—Ed.]

[3] [This journal has been since printed at length in the European Magazine for September, 1799 As it could not be introduced in this place without dislocating Mr. Boswell's extracts and wholly deranging his narrative, the Editor has thought it better to reserve it for the Appendix. It will be read with interest.—Ed.]

[4] Mr. Langton, whose name so often occurs in these volumes, survived Johnson several years. He died at Southampton, December 18, 1801, aged sixty-five.—Malone.

[5] [About the same time, death withdrew from the world Mr. Burke's old acquaintance, Dr. Johnson, from whom, in the vicissitudes of twenty-seven years, no estrangement occurred to intercept their mutual admiration and regard. He followed Dr. Johnson to the grave as a mourner, and in contemplating his character, applied to it a fine passage from Cicero, which might equally suit his own: "Intentum enim animum quasi arcum habebat, nec languescens succumbebat senectuti." When some one censured Johnson's general rudeness in society, he replied with equa

The following particu ars of his conversation within a few days of his death I give on the authority of Mr. John Nichols:

Nichols. "He said, that the Parliamentary Debates were the only part of his writings which then gave him any compunction: but that at the time he wrote them he had no conception he was imposing upon the world, though they were frequently written from very slender materials, and often from none at all,—the mere coinage of his own imagination. He never wrote any part of his works with equal velocity. Three columns of the magazine in an hour was no uncommon effort, which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity.

"Of his friend Cave he always spoke with great affection. 'Yet,' said he, 'Cave (who never looked out of his window but with a view to the Gentleman's Magazine) was a penurious paymaster; he would contract for lines by the hundred, and expect the long hundred; but he was a good man, and always delighted to have his friends at his table.'

"When talking of a regular edition of his own works, he said, that he had power (from the booksellers) to print such an edition, if his health admitted it; but had no power to assign over any edition, unless he could add notes, and so alter them as to make them new works; which his state of health forbade him to think of. 'I may possibly live,' said he, 'or rather breathe, three days, or perhaps three weeks; but find myself daily and gradually weaker.'

"He said at another time, three or four days only before his death, speaking of the little fear he had of undergoing a chirurgical operation, 'I would give one of these legs for a year more of life, I mean of comfortable life, not such as that which I now suffer;'—and lamented much his inability to read during his hours of restlessness. 'I used formerly,' he added, 'when sleepless in bed, *to read like a Turk.*'

"Whilst confined by his last illness, it was his regular practice to have the church service read to him by some attentive and friendly divine. The Rev. Mr. Hoole performed this kind office in my presence for the last time, when, by his own desire, no more than the litany was read; in which his responses were in the deep and sonorous voice which Mr. Boswell has occasionally noticed, and with the most profound devotion that can be imagined. His hearing not being quite perfect, he more than once interrupted Mr. Hoole with, 'Louder, my dear sir, louder, I entreat you, or you pray in vain!'—and, when the service was ended, he, with great earnestness, turned round to an excellent lady who was present, saying, 'I thank you, madam, very heartily, for your kindness in joining me in this solemn exercise. Live well, I conjure you; and you will not feel the compunction at the last which I now feel [1].' So truly humble were the thoughts which this great and good man entertained of his own approaches to religious perfection.

"He was earnestly invited to publish a volume of *Devotional Exercises;* but this (though he listened to the proposal with much complacency, and a large sum of money was offered for it) he declined, from motives of the sincerest modesty.

"He seriously entertained the thought of translating *Thuanus.* He often talked to me on the subject; and once, in particular, when I was rather wishing that he would favour the world, and gratify his sovereign, by a Life of Spencer (which he said that he would readily have done had he been able to obtain any new materials for the purpose), he added, 'I have been thinking again, sir, of *Thuanus:* it would not be the laborious task which you have supposed it. I should have no trouble but that of dictation, which would be performed as speedily as an amanuensis could write.'"

On the same undoubted authority [2] I give a few articles which should have been inserted in chronological order, but which, now that they are before me, I should be sorry to omit:

"Among the early associates of Johnson, at St. John's Gate, was Samuel Boyse, well known by his ingenious productions; and not less noted for his imprudence [3]. It was

consideration and truth, "It is well, when a man comes to die, if he has nothing worse to accuse himself of than some harshness in conversation." He often remarked, that Johnson was greater in discourse than even in writing, and that Boswell's Life was the best record of his powers. In 1790 he was one of the committee formed to erect a statue to his memory.—*Prior's Life of Burke,* vol. i. p. 454.—Ed.]

[1] [There is a slight error in Mr. Nichols's account, as appears by the following communication from the Rev. Mr. Hoole himself, now rector of Poplar: "My mother was with us when I read prayers to Dr. Johnson, on Wednesday, December 8th; but not for the *last* time, as is stated by Mr. Nichols, for I attended him again on Friday, the 10th. I must here mention an incident which shows how ready Johnson was to make amends for any little incivility. When I called upon him, the morning after he had pressed me rather roughly to read *louder*, he said, 'I was peevish yesterday; you must forgive me: when you are as old and as sick as I am, perhaps you may be peev ish too.' I have heard him make many apolo gies of this kind."—Ed.]

[2] [This, and the few next paragraphs, were u a *note* in former editions.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 336. Sir J. Hawkins has pre served the following ragi-comic petition, addres

not unusual for Boyse to be a customer to the pawnbroker. On one of these occasions, Dr. Johnson collected a sum of money to redeem his friend's clothes, which in two days after were pawned again. 'The sum,' said Johnson, 'was collected by sixpences, at a time when to me sixpence was a serious consideration.'

"Speaking one day of a person[1] for whom he had a real friendship, but in whom vanity was somewhat too predominant, he observed, that 'Kelly was so fond of displaying on his sideboard the plate which he possessed, that he added to it his spurs. For my part,' said he, 'I never was master of a pair of spurs, but once; and they are now at the bottom of the ocean. By the carelessness of Boswell's servant, they were dropped from the end of the boat, on our return from the Isle of Sky[2].'"

The late Reverend Mr. Samuel Babcock[3] having been introduced to Dr. Johnson by Mr. Nichols, some years before his death, thus expressed himself in a letter to that gentleman:

"How much I am obliged to you for the favour you did me in introducing me to Dr. Johnson! *Tantum vidi Virgilium.* But to have seen him, and to have received a testimony of respect from him, was enough. I recollect all the conversation, and shall never forget one of his expressions. Speaking of Dr. P****** [4], (whose writings, I saw, he estimated at a low rate,) he said, 'You have proved him as deficient in *probity* as he is in learning.' I called him an '*Index-Scholar*;' but he was not willing to allow him a claim even to that merit. He said 'that he borrowed from those who had been borrowers themselves, and did not know that the mistakes he adopted had been answered by others.' I often think of our short, but precious visit, to this great man. I shall consider it as a kind of an *æra* in my life."

It is to the mutual credit of Johnson and divines of different communions, that although he was a steady church of England man, there was, nevertheless, much agreeable intercourse between him and them. Let me particularly name the late Mr. La Trobe[5], and Mr. Hutton, of the Moravian

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sed by Boyse, from a sponging-house, to Cave, the printer, in 1742.

"INSCRIPTION FOR ST. LAZARUS'S CAVE.

"Hodie, teste cœlo summo,
Sine pane, sine nummo;
Sorte positus infeste,
Scribo tibi dolens mœste.
Fame, bile, tumet jecur:
Urbane, mitte opem, precor;
Tibi enim cor humanum
Non a malis alienum:
Mihi mens nec male grato,
Pro a te favore dato.

"Ex gehenna debitoria, "ALCÆUS."
"Vulgo, domo spongiatoria."

When Boyse's wife died, this strange man put his lap-dog into mourning by tying a black riband round his neck, and so carried the dog about in his arms to show his taste and sensibility. See Hawkins, p. 159.—ED.]

[1] [Hugh Kelly, the dramatic authour, who died in Gough-square in 1777, æt. 38. Kelly's first introduction to Johnson was not likely to have pleased a person of "predominant vanity." After having sat a short time, he got up to take his leave, saying, that he feared a longer visit might be troublesome. "Not in the least, sir." Johnson is said to have replied, "I had forgotten that you were in the room."—ED.]

[2] [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 377.—ED.]

[3] [Chiefly known as a Monthly Reviewer, and for a controversy with Dr. Priestley, whose friend and admirer he had previously been. He had been bred a dissenter, but conformed to the established church, and was ordained in 1787. He died soon after, in May, 1788, æt. 41.—ED.]

[4] [Priestley.—ED.]

[5] [The son of Mr. La Trobe has published (in the Christian Observer for January, 1828), "in order," as he says, "that the tradition may not be lost," a corroboration of some remarks, which appeared in that work for the October and November preceding, on the last days of Dr. Johnson. Mr. La Trobe's statement tends, as far as it goes, to confirm the opinion already, it is hoped, universally entertained, that Johnson's death was truly christian. But Mr. La Trobe had little to tell, and of that little unfortunately the prominent facts are indisputably erroneous. Mr. La Trobe states that "Dr. Johnson had during his last illness sent every day to know when his father, who was then out of town, would come back. The moment he arrived he went to the Doctor's house, but found him speechless, though sensible. Mr. La Trobe addressed to him some religious exhortation, which Johnson showed by pressing his hand and other signs, that he understood and was thankful for. He expired the next morning, and Mr. La Trobe always regretted not having been able to attend Dr. Johnson sooner, according to his wish." The reader will see that the inference suggested by this statement is, that Dr. Johnson wished for the spiritual assistance of Mr La Trobe, in addition (or it might even be inferred, in *preference*) to that of his near and dear friends, Mr. Hoole and Dr. Strahan, clergymen of the established church. Now the facts of the case essentially contradict Mr. La Trobe's account, and any inferences which might be deducible from it. Doctor Johnson, as will be seen in the *Diaries* of Sir J. Hawkins and Mr. Windham, was not *speechless* the day before his death, nor did he die next *morning* (which seems mentioned as the reason why Mr. La Trobe's visit was not repeated), but in the *evening*. And, which is quite conclusive, it appears from Mr. Hoole's *Diary*, that Mr. La Trobe's visit to Dr. Johnson's residence (and his son admits there was but *one*) took place about eleven o'clock in the forenoon of the 10th, *three* days before Dr. Johnson's death; that Mr. La Trobe *did not even see him*, and that it was in the course of that very day that

profession. His intimacy with the English Benedictines at Paris has been mentioned; and as an additional proof of the charity in which he lived with good men of the Romish church, I am happy in this opportunity of recording his friendship with the Reverend Thomas Hussey, D. D. [1], his catholick majesty's chaplain of embassy at the court of London, that very respectable man, eminent not only for his powerful eloquence as a preacher, but for his various abilities and acquisitions. Nay, though Johnson loved a Presbyterian the least of all, this did not prevent his having a long and uninterrupted social connexion with the Reverend Dr. James Fordyce, who, since his death, hath gratefully celebrated him in a warm strain of devotional composition.

Amidst the melancholy clouds which hung over the dying Johnson, his characteristical manner showed itself on different occasions.

When Dr. Warren, in his usual style, hoped that he was better, his answer was, "No, sir; you cannot conceive with what acceleration I advance towards death."

A man whom he had never seen before was employed one night to sit up with him. Being asked next morning how he liked his attendant, his answer was, "Not at all, sir: the fellow's an idiot; he is as awkward as a turnspit when first put into the wheel, and as sleepy as a dormouse."

He repeated with great spirit a poem, consisting of several stanzas, in four lines, in alternate rhyme, which he said he had composed some years before [2], on occasion of a rich, extravagant young gentleman's coming of age [3]: saying he had never repeated it but once since he composed it, and had given but one copy of it. That copy was given to Mrs. Thrale, now Piozzi, who has published it in a book which she entitles "British Synonyma" but which is truly a collection of entertaining remarks and stories, no matter whether accurate or not. Being a piece of exquisite satire, conveyed in a strain of pointed vivacity and humour, and in a manner of which no other instance is to be found in Johnson's writings, I shall here insert it.

"Long-expected one-and twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great [Sir John], are now your own

"Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

"Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

"All that prey on vice and folly
Joy to see their quarry fly:
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender, grave and sly.

"Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill

"When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres? what are houses?
Only dirt, or wet or dry.

"Should the guardian friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste:
Scorn their counsels, scorn then pother,
You can hang or drown at last."

As he opened a note which his servant brought to him, he said, "An odd thought strikes me:—we shall receive no letters in the grave [4]."

He requested three things of Sir Joshua Reynolds:—To forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him;—to read the Bible;—and never to use his pencil on a Sunday. Sir Joshua readily acquiesced.

Indeed he showed the greatest anxiety for the religious improvement of his friends, to whom he discoursed of its infinite consequence. He begged of Mr. Hoole to think of what he had said, and to commit it to writing; and, upon being afterwards assured that this was done, pressed his hands, and in an earnest tone thanked him. Dr. Brocklesby having attended him with the utmost assiduity and kindness as his physi-

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Mr. Hoole read prayers to him and a small congregation of friends. So little can anecdotes at second hand be trusted.—Ed.]

[1] [No doubt the gentleman who is so conspicuous in Mr. Cumberland's Memoirs. He was subsequently first master of the Roman Catholic college at Maynooth, and titular bishop of Waterford, in Ireland, in which latter capacity he published, in 1797, a pastoral charge, which excited a good deal of observation.—Ed.]

[2] In 1780. See his letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated August 8th, 1780. "You have heard in the papers how [Lade] is come to age: I have enclosed a short song of congratulation, which you must not show to any body. It is odd that it should come into any body's head. I hope you will read it with candour; it is, I believe, one of the authour's first essays in that way of writing, and a beginner is always to be treated with tenderness."—Malone.

[3] [Sir John Lade. See *ante*, p. 119.—Ed.]

[4] [Thoughts of the same class had already struck Jeremy Taylor:—"What servants shall we have to wait on us in the grave? What friends to visit us? What officious people to cleanse away the moist and unwholesome cloud reflected on our faces from the sides of the weeping vaults, which are the longest weepers at our funeral!"—*Holy Dying*, chap. i. § 2.—Ed.]

cian and friend, he was peculiarly desirous that this gentleman should not entertain any loose speculative notions, but he confirmed in the truths of Christianity and insisted on his writing down in his presence, as nearly as he could collect it, the import of what passed on the subject: and Dr. Brocklesby having complied with the request, he made him sign the paper, and urged him to keep it in his own custody as long as he lived.

Johnson, with that native fortitude, which, amidst all his bodily distress and mental sufferings, never forsook him, asked Dr. Brocklesby, as a man in whom he had confidence, to tell him plainly whether he could recover. "Give me," said he, "a direct answer." The doctor having first asked him if he could bear the whole truth, which way soever it might lead, and being answered that he could, declared that, in his opinion, he could not recover without a miracle. "Then," said Johnson, "I will take no more physick, not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded [1]." In this resolution he persevered, and, at the same time, used only the weakest kinds of sustenance. Being pressed by Mr. Windham to take somewhat more generous nourishment, lest too low a diet should have the very effect which he dreaded, by debilitating his mind, he said, "I will take any thing but inebriating sustenance."

Mr. Windham having placed a pillow conveniently to support him, he thanked him for his kindness, and said, "That will do,—all that a pillow can do."

[The following extract [2] from a private journal kept by Mr. Windham will be read with interest.

"Tuesday, December 7, 1784.
Ten minutes past 2, P. M

"After waiting some short time in the adjoining room, I was admitted to Dr. Johnson in his bed-chamber, where, after placing me next him in the chair (he sitting in his usual place, on the east side of the room, and I on his right hand), he put into my hands two small volumes (an edition of the New Testament, as he afterwards told me), saying, 'Extremum hoc munus morientis habeto.' Wind. MSS. Virg. Ecl. viii

"He then proceeded to observe that I was entering upon a life which would lead me deeply into all the business of the world: that he did not condemn civil employment, but that it was a state of great danger, and that he had therefore one piece of advice earnestly to impress upon me, that I would set apart every seventh day for the care of my soul. That one day, the seventh, should be employed in repenting what was amiss in the six preceding, and fortifying my virtue for the six to come. That such a portion of time was surely little enough for the meditation of eternity.

"He then told me that he had a request to make to me, namely, that I would allow his servant Frank to look up to me as his friend, adviser, and protector, in all difficulties which his own weakness and imprudence, or the force or fraud of others, might bring him into. He said that he had left him what he considered an ample provision, viz. seventy pounds per annum; but that even that sum might not place him above the want of a protector, and to me, therefore, he recommended him as to one who had will, and power, and activity to protect him. Having obtained my assent to this, he proposed that Frank should be called in; and desiring me to take him by the hand in token of the promise, repeated before him the recommendation he had just made of him, and the promise I had given to attend to it.

"I then took occasion to say how much I felt—what I had long foreseen that I should feel—regret at having spent so little of my life in his company. I stated this as an instance where resolutions are deferred till the occasions are past. For some time past I had determined that such an occasion of self-reproach should not subsist, and had built upon the hope of passing in his society the chief part of my time, at the moment when it was to be apprehended we were about to lose him for ever.

[1] [The following is an instance of a similar spirit:—"Maria Theresa, queen of Hungary and Bohemia, who died about 1780, was a woman of great strength of mind, united with other estimable qualities. A short time before her death, one of the ladies near her person, in reply to an inquiry made respecting the state of the empress, answered, that her majesty seemed to be asleep. 'No,' replied she, 'I could sleep if I would indulge repose, but I am sensible of the near approach of death, and I will not allow myself to be surprised by him in my sleep. *I wish to meet my dissolution awake.*' There is nothing transmitted to us by antiquity finer than this answer, which is divested of all ostentation."—*Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his own Time*, vol. i. p. 365.—MARKLAND.]

[2] [Understanding that a journal kept by the late Mr. Windham contained some particulars relative to Dr. Johnson, the Editor applied to his friend, Admiral Windham, that gentleman's nephew and heir, for permission to see the journal, which the admiral most readily granted; but a gentleman to whose care the papers had been previously consigned with a view to his writing a life of Mr. Windham, declined to favour the Editor with the desired information. From another quarter, however, he is enabled to present the reader with this extract made from the original journal before it had received its present destination.—ED.]

"I had no difficulty in speaking to him thus of my apprehensions. I could not help, on the other hand, entertaining hopes, but with these I did not like to trouble him, lest he should conceive that I thought it necessary to flatter him: he answered hastily, that he was sure I would not; and proceeded to make a compliment to the manliness of my mind, which, whether deserved or not, ought to be remembered, that it may be deserved.

"I then stated, that among other neglects was the omission of introducing of all topics the most important, the consequence of which particularly filled my mind at that moment, and in which I had often been desirous to know his opinions; the subjects I meant were, I said, natural and revealed religion. The wish thus generally stated was in part gratified on the instant. For revealed religion, he said, there was such historical evidence, as upon any subject not religious would have left no doubt. Had the facts recorded in the New Testament been mere civil occurrences, no one would have called in question the testimony by which they are established; but the importance annexed to them, amounting to nothing less than the salvation of mankind, raised a cloud in our minds, and created doubts unknown upon any other subject. Of proofs to be derived from history, one of the most cogent, he seemed to think, was the opinion so well authenticated, and so long entertained, of a deliverer that was to appear about that time. Among the typical representations, the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, in which no bone was to be broken, had early struck his mind. For the immediate life and miracles of Christ, such attestation as that of the apostles, who all, except St. John, confirmed their testimony with their blood—such belief as these witnesses procured from a people best furnished with the means of judging, and least disposed to judge favourably—such an extension afterwards of that belief over all the nations of the earth, though originating from a nation of all others most despised, would leave no doubt that the things witnessed were true, and were of a nature more than human. With respect to evidence, Dr. Johnson observed, that we had not such evidence that Cæsar died in the Capitol, as that Christ died in the manner related.

"December 11th.—Went with Sir Joshua, whom I took up by the way, to see Dr. Johnson. Strahan and Langton there. No hopes; though a great discharge had taken place from the legs.

"December 12th.—At about half-past seven, P. M. went to Dr. Johnson's, where I stayed, chiefly in the outer room, till past eleven. Strahan there during the whole time; during part Mr. Hoole; and latterly Mr. Cruikshanks and the apothecary. I only went in twice, for a few minutes each time: the first time I hinted only what they had before been urging, namely, that he would be prevailed upon to take some sustenance, and desisted upon his exclaiming, 'Tis all very childish; let us hear no more of it.' The second time I came in, in consequence of a consultation with Mr. Cruikshanks and the apothecary, and addressed him formally, after premising, that I considered what I was going to say as matter of duty: I said that I hoped he would not suspect me of the weakness of importuning him to take nourishment for the purpose of prolonging his life for a few hours or days. I then stated what the reason was. It was to secure that which I was persuaded that he was most anxious about, namely, that he might preserve his faculties entire to the last moment. Before I had quite stated my meaning, he interrupted me by saying, that he had refused no sustenance but inebriating sustenance; and proceeded to give instances where, in compliance with the wishes of his physician, he had taken even a small quantity of wine. I readily assented to any objections he might have to nourishment of that kind, and observing that milk was the only nourishment I intended, flattered myself that I had succeeded in my endeavours, when he recurred to his general refusal, and 'begged that there might be an end of it.' I then said, that I hoped he would forgive my earnestness, or something to that effect, when he replied eagerly, that from me nothing could be necessary by way of apology; adding, with great fervour, in words which I shall, I hope, never forget, 'God bless you, my dear Windham, through Jesus Christ;' and concluding with a wish 'that we might [share] in some humble portion of that happiness which God might finally vouchsafe to repentant sinners.' These were the last words I ever heard him speak. I hurried out of the room with tears in my eyes, and more affected than I had been on any former occasion.

"December 13th.—In the morning meant to have met Mr. Cruikshanks in Bolt-Court, but while I was deliberating about going, was sent for by Mr. Burke. Went to Bolt-Court about half-past three, found that Dr. Johnson had been almost constantly asleep since nine in the morning, and heard from Mr. Desmoulins what passed in the night. He had compelled Frank to give him a lancet, and had besides concealed in the bed a pair of scissors, and, with one or the other of them, had scarified himself in three places, two of them in the leg. On Mr. Desmoulins making a difficulty in giving him the lancet, he said, 'Do n't, if you have any scruple; but I will compel Frank:' and on Mr. Desmoulins attempting after

wards to prevent Frank from giving it to him, and at last to restrain his hand, he grew very outrageous, so as to call Frank scoundrel, and to threaten Mr. Desmoulins that he would stab him[1]; he then made the three incisions above mentioned, two of which were not unskilfully made; but one of those in the leg was a deep and ugly wound, from which they suppose him to have lost at least eight ounces of blood.

"Upon Dr. Heberden expressing his fears about the scarification, Dr. Johnson told him he was *timidorum timidissimus*. A few days before his death, talking with Dr. Brocklesby, he said, 'Now will you ascribe my death to my having taken eight grains of squills when you recommended only three? Dr. Heberden, to my having opened my left foot when nature was pointing out the discharge in the right?' The conversation was introduced by his quoting some lines, to the same purpose, from Swift's verses on his own death[2].

"It was within the same period, if I understood Dr. Brocklesby right, that he enjoined him, as an honest man and a physician, to inform him how long he thought he had to live. Dr. Brocklesby inquired, in return, whether he had firmness to bear the answer. Upon his replying that he had, and Dr. Brocklesby limiting the time to a few weeks, he said, 'that he then would trouble himself no more with medicine or medical advice:' and to this resolution he pretty much adhered.

"In a conversation about what was practicable in medicine or surgery, he quoted, to the surprise of his physicians, the opinion of Marchetti for an operation of extracting (I think) part of the kidney. He recommended, for an account of China, Sir John Mandeville's Travels. Halliday's Notes on Juvenal he thought so highly of as to have employed himself for some time in translating them into Latin.

"He insisted on the doctrine of an expiatory sacrifice as the condition without which there was no Christianity[3]; and urged in support the belief entertained in all ages, and by all nations, barbarous as well as polite. He recommended to Dr. Brocklesby, also, Clarke's Sermons, and repeated to him the passage which he had spoken of to me.

"While airing one day with Dr. Brocklesby, in passing and returning by St. Pancras church, he fell into prayer, and mentioned, upon Dr. Brocklesby's inquiring, why the Catholics chose that for their burying-place, that some Catholics, in Queen Elizabeth's time, had been burnt there[4]. Upon Dr. Brocklesby's asking him whether he did not feel the warmth of the sun, he quoted from Juvenal,

'Præterea minimus gelido jam in corpore sanguis
Febre calet solâ[5].'——

"December 13th.—Forty-five minutes past ten, P. M. While writing the preceding articles, I received the fatal account, so long dreaded, that Dr. Johnson was no more!

"May those prayers which he incessantly poured from a heart fraught with the deepest devotion find their acceptance with Him to whom they were addressed; which piety, so humble and so fervent, may seem to promise!"]

[The following Journal, by Sir J. Hawkins, of the last fortnight of Dr. Johnson's life, though it must necessarily repeat some facts already stated, cannot be either omitted or curtailed. ED.

"Sunday, 28th. I saw him about noon; he was dozing; but waking, he found himself in a circle of his friends. Upon opening his eyes, he said that the prospect of his dissolution was very terrible to him, and addressed himself to us all, in nearly these words: 'You see the state in which I am; conflicting with bodily pain and mental distraction: while you are in health and strength, labour to do good, Hawk. p 583–592.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 433. The reader will judge whether Boswell's or Hawkins's account of this transaction is the juster; but that more importance may not be given to it than it deserves, it must be recollected, that Johnson fancied that his attendants were treating him with a timid leniency, merely to spare him pain, a notion which irritated, at once, his love of life, his animal courage, and his high moral principle. We have already seen (*ante*, p. 398) that when in health he had said, *whoever is afraid of anything is a scoundrel*, and now in the same feeling, and the same words, he censures the cowardly, as he thought them, apprehensions of his attendants. It might be wished, that in such circumstances he had spoken and acted with less impatience; but let us not forget the excuses which may be drawn from the natural infirmity of his temper, exasperated by the peevishness of a long and painful disease.—ED.]

[2] ["The doctors, tender of their fame,
Wisely on one lay all the blame:
'We must confess his case was nice,
But he would never take advice;
Had he been ruled, for aught appears,
He might have lived these twenty years;
For when we open'd him, we found
That all his vital parts were sound.'"—ED.]

[3] [This confirms the Editor's opinion, *ante*, p. 127.—ED.]

[4] [The reader will be aware that *other* causes have been assigned for this preference, but I learn, from unquestionable authority, that it rests upon no foundation, and that mere *prejudice* exists amongst the Roman Catholics in favour of this church, as is the case with respect to other places of burial in various parts of the kingdom.—MARKLAND.]

[5] [*Ante*, p. 416.—ED.]

and avoid evil, if ever you hope to escape the distress that now oppresses me.' A little while after, 'I had very early in my life the seeds of goodness in me: I had a love of virtue, and a reverence for religion; and these, I trust, have brought forth in me fruits meet for repentance [1]; and if I have repented as I ought, I am forgiven. I have, at times, entertained a loathing of sin and of myself, particularly at the beginning of this year, when I had the prospect of death before me; and this has not abated when my fears of death have been less; and, at these times, I have had such rays of hope shot into my soul, as have almost persuaded me that I am in a state of reconciliation with God.'

"29th. Mr. Langton, who had spent the evening with him, reported, that his hopes were increased, and that he was much cheered upon being reminded of the general tendency of his writings, and of his example.

"30th. I saw him in the evening, and found him cheerful. Was informed that he had, for his dinner, eaten heartily of a French duck pie and a pheasant.

"Dec. 1. He was busied in destroying papers. Gave to Mr. Langton and another person [2], to fair copy, some translations of the Greek epigrams, which he had made in the preceding nights, and transcribed the next morning, and they began to work on them.

"3d. Finding his legs continue to swell, he signified to his physicians a strong desire to have them scarified, but they, unwilling to put him to pain, and fearing a mortification, declined advising it. He afterwards consulted his surgeon, and he performed the operation on one leg.

"4th. I visited him: the scarification made yesterday in his leg appeared to have had little effect. He said to me, that he was easier in his mind, and as fit to die at that instant as he could be a year hence. He requested me to receive the sacrament with him on Sunday, the next day. Complained of great weakness, and of phantoms that haunted his imagination.

"5th. Being Sunday, I *communicated* with him and Mr. Langton, and other of his friends, as many as nearly filled the room. Mr. Strahan, who was constant in his attdance on him throughout his illness, performed the office. Previous to reading the exhortation, Johnson knelt, and, with a degree of fervour that I had never been witness to before, uttered the following most eloquent and energetic prayer:

"'Almighty and most merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it seems, about to commemorate, for the last time, the death of thy son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in his merits and in thy mercy: forgive and accept my late conversion; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance; make this commemoration of him available to the confirmation of my faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and make the death of thy son Jesus effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the multitude of my offences. Bless my friends, have mercy upon all men. Support me by the grace of thy holy spirit in the days of weakness, and at the hour of death, and receive me, at my death, to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ.—Amen [3].'

"Upon rising from his knees, after the office was concluded, he said, that he dreaded to meet God in a state of idiocy, or with opium in his head; and that having now communicated with the effects of a dose upon him, he doubted if his exertions were the genuine operations of his mind, and repeated from bishop Taylor this sentiment, 'That little that has been omitted in health can be done to any purpose in sickness.'

"He very much admired, and often in the course of his illness recited, from the conclusion of old Isaac Walton's Life of Bishop Sanderson, the following pathetick request: 'Thus this pattern of meekness and primitive innocence changed this for a better life:—'t is now too late to wish that mine may be like his; for I am in the eigh ty-fifth year of my age, and God knows it hath not; but, I most humbly beseech Almighty God, that my death may; and I do as earnestly beg, that if any reader shall receive any satisfaction from this very plain, and, as true relation, he will be so charitable as to say, Amen.'

"While he was dressing and preparing

[1] ["Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance."—*St. Luke*, chap. iii. v. 8.—Ed.]

[2] [Young Mr. Desmoulins.—Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Boswell in quoting this prayer, which was preserved by Mr. Strahan and inserted in his publication, introduces it with the following words: "Johnson having thus in his mind the true Christian scheme, at once rational and consolatory, uniting justice and mercy in the Divinity, and the improvement of human nature, previous to his receiving the Holy Sacrament in his apartment, composed and fervently uttered this prayer;" and follows it with an account of Dr. Johnson's dissolution, which, to prevent tautology in the text and yet to preserve every word of Mr. Boswell's work, the Editor subjoins here. "Having, as has been already mentioned, made his will on the 8th and 9th of December, and settled all his worldly affairs, he languished till Monday, the 13th of that month, when he expired, about seven o'clock in the evening, with so little apparent pain, that his attendants hardly perceived when his dissolution took place." These two passages and the prayer occupy the space in the original edition which in this is taken up with Hawkins's diary —Ed.]

for this solemnity, an accident happened which went very near to disarrange his mind. He had mislaid, and was very anxious to find a paper that contained private instructions to his executors; and myself, Mr. Strahan, Mr. Langton, Mr. Hoole, Frank, and I believe some others that were about him, went into his bed-chamber to seek it. In our search, I laid my hands on a parchment-covered book, into which I imagined it might have been slipped. Upon opening the book, I found it to be meditations and reflections, in Johnson's own hand-writing; and having been told a day or two before by Frank, that a person [1] formerly intimately connected with his master, a joint proprietor of a newspaper, well known among the booksellers, and of whom Mrs. Williams once told me she had often cautioned him to beware; I say, having been told that this person had lately been very importunate to get access to him, indeed to such a degree as that, when he was told that the Doctor was not to be seen, he would push his way up stairs; and having stronger reasons than I need here mention to suspect that this man might find and make an ill use of the book, I put it, and a less of the same kind, into my pocket; at the same time telling those around me, and particularly Mr. Langton and Mr. Strahan, that I had got both, with my reasons for thus securing them. After the ceremony was over, Johnson took me aside, and told me that I had a book of his in my pocket; I answered that I had two, and that to prevent their falling into the hands of a person who had attempted to force his way into the house, I had done as I conceived a friendly act, but not without telling his friends of it, and also my reasons. He then asked me what ground I had for my suspicion of the man I mentioned: I told him his great importunity to get admittance; and farther, that immediately after a visit which he made me, in the year 1775, I missed a paper of a public nature, and of great importance; and that a day or two after, and before it could be put to its intended use, I saw it in the newspapers [2].

"At the mention of this circumstance, Johnson paused; but recovering himself, said, 'You should not have laid hands on the book; for had I missed it, and not known you had it, I should have roared for my book, as Othello did for his handkerchief, and probably have run mad.'

"I gave him time, till the next day, to compose himself, and then wrote him a letter, apologizing, and assigning at large the reasons for my conduct; and received a verbal answer by Mr. Langton, which, were I to repeat it, would render me suspected of inexcusable vanity [3]; it concluded with these words, 'If I was not satisfied with this, I must be a savage.'

"7th. I again visited him. Before my departure, Dr. Brocklesby came in, and, taking him by the wrist, Johnson gave him a look of great contempt, and ridiculed the judging of his disorder by the pulse. He complained that the sarcocele had again made its appearance, and asked if a puncture would not relieve him, as it had done the year before; the doctor answered that it might, but that his surgeon was the best judge of the effect of such an operation. Johnson, upon this, said, 'How many men in a year die through the timidity of those whom they consult for health! I want length of life, and you fear giving me pain, which I care not for.'

"8th. I visited him with Mr. Langton, and found him dictating to Mr. Strahan another will [4], the former being, as he had said at the time of making it, a temporary one. On our entering the room, he said, 'God bless you both.' I arrived just time enough to direct the execution, and also the attestation of it. After he had published it, he desired Mr. Strahan to say the Lord's prayer, which he did, all of us join-

[1] [Mr. George Steevens. See *ante*, p. 436. ED.]

[2] "As I take no pleasure in the disgrace of others, I regret the necessity I am under of mentioning these particulars: my reason for it is, that the transaction which so disturbed him may possibly be better known than the motives that actuated me at the time."—HAWKINS. [Miss Hawkins's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 264, tells this story in the same way, supplies Steevens's name, and insists on the same justification, which would be quite inconclusive, even if the fact on which the suspicion against Steevens was grounded were true, for the purloined paper was only a copy of an address from the Middlesex magistrates to the king (which was, from its very nature, destined for publication). And after all, there was no other proof that Steevens had taken this paper than that it appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle* the day after Steevens had made a visit at Sir John's. Hawkins's act was unjustifiable, and the defence frivolous. It is observable, that there was no allusion to these circumstances in the *first edition* of Hawkins's work.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 436, *n.*—ED.]

[4] [There seems something odd in this affair of the will. Why did Johnson, after employing Sir J. Hawkins, a professional and in every other respect a proper person to draw up his will, throw it aside, and dictate another to a young clergyman? Had Sir J. Hawkins attempted to thwart the testator's intentions, which he tells us he disapproved of: or was this change the result of the scene of the 5th about the *secreted* books? In any case, it may have tended to produce that unfavourable temper towards Dr. Johnson which tinges the whole, and certainly discolours some passages of Sir J. Hawkins's book.—ED.]

ing. Johnson, after it, uttered, extempore, a few pious ejaculations.

"9th. I saw him in the evening, and found him dictating, to Mr. Strahan, a codicil to the will he had made the evening before. I assisted them in it, and received from the testator a direction, to insert a devise to his executors of the house at Lichfield, to be sold for the benefit of certain of his relations, a bequest of sundry pecuniary and specific legacies, a provision for the annuity of 70*l.* for Francis, and, after all, a devise of all the rest, residue, and remainder of his estate and effects, to his executors, in trust for the said Francis Barber, his executors and administrators; and having dictated accordingly, Johnson executed and published it as a codicil to his will [1].

"He was now so weak as to be unable to kneel, and lamented that he must pray sitting; but, with an effort, he placed himself on his knees, while Mr. Strahan repeated the Lord's Prayer. During the whole of the evening, he was much composed and resigned. Being become very weak and helpless, it was thought necessary that a man should watch with him all night; and one was found in the neighbourhood, who, for half a crown a night, undertook to sit up with and assist him. When the man had left the room, he, in the presence and hearing of Mr. Strahan and Mr. Langton, asked me where I meant to bury him. I answered, doubtless, in Westminster abbey: 'If,' said he, 'my executors think it proper to mark the spot of my interment by a stone, let it be so placed as to protect my body from injury.' I assured him it should be done. Before my departure, he desired Mr. Langton to put into my hands money to the amount of upwards of 100*l.* with a direction to keep it till called for.

"10th. This day at noon I saw him again. He said to me, that the male nurse to whose care I had committed him was unfit for the office. 'He is,' said he, 'an idiot, as awkward as a turnspit just put into the wheel, and as sleepy as a dormouse.' Mr. Cruikshanks came into the room, and looking on his scarified leg, saw no sign of a mortification.

"11th. At noon, I found him dozing, and would not disturb him.

"12th. Saw him again; found him very weak, and, as he said, unable to pray.

"13th. At noon I called at the house, but went not into his room, being told that he was dozing. I was further informed by the servants, that his appetite was totally gone, and that he could take no sustenance. At eight in the evening of the same day, word was brought me by Mr. Sastres, to whom, in his last moments, he uttered these words, 'Jam moriturus,' that at a quarter past seven, he had, without a groan, or the least sign of pain or uneasiness, yielded his last breath.

"At eleven, the same evening, Mr. Langton came to me, and, in an agony of mind, gave me to understand, that our friend had wounded himself in several parts of the body. I was shocked at the news; but, upon being told that he had not touched any vital part, was easily able to account for an action, which would else have given us the deepest concern. The fact was, that conceiving himself to be full of water, he had done that, which he had often solicited his medical assistants to do, made two or three incisions in his lower limbs, vainly hoping for some relief from the flux that might follow.

"Early the next morning, Frank came to me; and, being desirous of knowing all the particulars of this transaction, I interrogated him very strictly concerning it, and received from him answers to the following effect:

"That, at eight in the morning of the preceding day, upon going into the bedchamber, his master, being in bed, ordered him to open a cabinet, and give him a drawer in it; that he did so, and that out of it his master took a case of lancets, and chose

[1] "How much soever I approve of the practice of rewarding the fidelity of servants, I cannot but think that, in testamentary dispositions in their favour, some discretion ought to be exercised; and that in scarce any instance they are to be preferred to those who are allied to the testator either in blood or by affinity. Of the merits of this servant, a judgment may be formed from what I shall hereafter have occasion to say of him. It was hinted to me many years ago, by his master, that he was a loose fellow; and I learned from others, that, after an absence from his service of some years, he married. In his search of a wife, he picked up one of those creatures with whom, in the disposal of themselves, no contrariety of colour is an obstacle. It is said, that soon after his marriage he became jealous, and, it may be supposed, that he continued so, till, by presenting him with a daughter of her own colour, his wife put an end to all his doubts on that score. Notwithstanding which, Johnson, in the excess of indiscriminating benevolence, about a year before his death, took the wife and her two children into his house, and made them a part of his family, and, by the codicil to his will, made a disposition in his favour, to the amount in value of near fifteen hundred pounds."—HAWKINS. [Several small causes contributed to make Sir J. Hawkins dislike Barber; who, in the kind of feud and rivalry between Sir John and Mr. Boswell, sided with the latter, and communicated to him the papers to which he, as residuary legatee, became entitled. It is painful to see in a man of Sir J. Hawkins's station, such rancour as prompted the imputation made in the foregoing note against the poor woman, Barber's wife, whose moral conduct, whatever it may have been, had surely nothing to do with Sir John Hawkins's squabbles with her husband.—ED.]

ing one of them, would have conveyed it into the bed, which Frank and a young man that sat up with him seeing, they seized his hand, and entreated him not to do a rash action: he said he would not; but drawing his hand under the bed-clothes, they saw his arm move. Upon this they turned down the clothes, and saw a great effusion of blood, which soon stopped; that soon after, he got at a pair of scissors that lay in a drawer by him, and plunged them deep in the calf of each leg; that immediately they sent for Mr. Cruikshanks and the apothecary, and they, or one of them, dressed the wounds; that he then fell into that dozing which carried him off; that it was conjectured he lost eight or ten ounces of blood; and that this effusion brought on the dozing, though his pulse continued firm till three o'clock.

"That this act was not done to hasten[1] his end, but to discharge the water that he conceived to be in him, I have not the least doubt. A dropsy was his disease; he looked upon himself as a bloated carcass; and, to attain the power of easy respiration, would have undergone any degree of temporary pain. He dreaded neither punctures nor incisions, and, indeed, defied the trochar and the lancet; he had often reproached his physicians and surgeon with cowardice: and when Mr. Cruikshanks scarified his leg, he cried out, 'Deeper, deeper; I will abide the consequence: you are afraid of your reputation, but that is nothing to me.' To those about him he said, 'You all pretend to love me, but you do not love me so well as I myself do.'

"I have been thus minute in recording the particulars of his last moments, because I wished to attract attention to the conduct of this great man, under the most trying circumstances human nature is subject to. Many persons have appeared possessed of more serenity of mind in this awful scene; some have remained unmoved at the dissolution of the vital union; and it may be deemed a discouragement from the severe practice of religion, that Dr. Johnson, whose whole life was a preparation for his death, and a conflict with natural infirmity, was disturbed with terror at the prospect of he grave[2]. Let not this relax the circumspection of any one. It is true, that natural firmness of spirit, or the confidence of hope, may buoy up the mind to the last; but however heroic an undaunted death may appear, it is not what we should pray for. As Johnson lived the life of the righteous, his end was that of a Christian; he strictly fulfilled the injunction of the apostle, to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; and though his doubts and scruples were certainly very distressing to himself, they give his friends a pious hope, that he, who added to almost all the virtues of christianity, that religious humility which its great teacher inculcated, will, in the fulness of time, receive the reward promised to a patient continuance in well doing."]

Of his last moments, my brother[3] Thomas David has furnished me with the following particulars:

"The Doctor, from the time that he was certain his death was near, appeared to be perfectly resigned, was seldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often said to his faithful servant, who gave me this account, 'Attend, Francis, to the salvation of your soul, which is the object of greatest importance:' he also explained to him passages in the scripture, and seemed to have pleasure in talking upon religious subjects.

"On Monday, the 13th of December, the day on which he died, a Miss Morris[4], daughter to a particular friend of his, called, and said to Francis, that she begged to be permitted to see the Doctor, that she might earnestly request him to give her his blessing. Francis went into the room, followed by the young lady, and delivered the message. The Doctor turned himself in the bed, and said, 'God bless you, my dear!' These were the last words he spoke. His difficulty of breathing increased till about seven o'clock in the evening, when Mr. Barber and Mrs. Desmoulins, who were sitting in the room, observing that the noise he made in breathing had ceased, went to the bed, and found he was dead."

[The following letter, written with an agitated hand, from the very chamber of death, by the amiable Mr. Langton, ED.

[1] [The clumsy solemnity with which Hawkins thinks it necessary to defend Dr. Johnson from the suspicion of endeavouring to *shorten* his life by an act manifestly, avowedly, and even passionately meant to *prolong* it, is certainly very offensive; but it hardly, the Editor thinks, justifies Mr. Boswell's suspicions (*ante*, p. 433. *n.*) that there was some malevolence at the bottom of the defence.—ED.]

[2] [Hawkins seems to confound two different periods. At the first appearance of danger, Dr. Johnson exhibited great, and perhaps gloomy anxiety, which, however, under the gradual effect of religious contemplations and devotional exercises, gave way to more comfortable hopes suggested by a lively faith in the propitiatory merits of his Redeemer. In this tranquillizing disposition the last days of his life seem to have been passed, and in this christian confidence it is believed that he died.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, p. 236.—ED.]

[4] [She was the sister of a lady of the same name who appeared on the stage at Covent-garden as Juliet, in 1768, and died next year. She was a relation of Mr. Corbyn Morris, commissioner of the customs.—*European Magazine*, Sept 1799, p. 158.—ED.]

and obviously interrupted by his feelings, will not unaptly close the story of so long a friendship. The letter is not addressed, but Mr. Langton's family believe it was intended for Mr. Boswell.

MS. My dear sir,—After many conflicting hopes and fears respecting the event of this heavy return of illness which has assailed our honoured friend, Dr. Johnson, since his arrival from Lichfield, about four days ago the appearances grew more and more awful, and this afternoon at eight o'clock, when I arrived at his house to see how he should be going on, I was acquainted at the door, that about three quarters of an hour before, he had breathed his last. I am now writing in the room where his venerable remains exhibit a spectacle, the interesting solemnity of which, difficult as it would be in any sort to find terms to express, so to you, my dear sir, whose own sensations will paint it so strongly, it would be of all men the most superfluous to attempt to———.]

The Reverend Mr. Strahan, who was the son of his friend, and had been always one of his great favourites, had, during his last illness, the satisfaction of contributing to soothe and comfort him. That gentleman's house at Islington, of which he is vicar, afforded Johnson, occasionally and easily, an agreeable change of place and fresh air; and he attended also upon him in town in the discharge of the sacred offices of his profession.

Mr. Strahan has given me the agreeable assurance, that after being in much agitation, Johnson became quite composed, and continued so till his death.

Dr. Brocklesby, who will not be suspected of fanaticism, obliged me with the following accounts:

"For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and *propitiation* of Jesus Christ.

"He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the *sacrifice* of Jesus, as necessary beyond all good works whatever for the salvation of mankind.

"He pressed me to study Dr. Clarke and to read his sermons. I asked him why he pressed Dr. Clarke, an Arian[1]. 'Because,' said he, 'he is fullest on the *propitiatory sacrifice*.'"

About two days after his death, the following very agreeable account was communicated to Mr. Malone, in a letter by the Honourable John Byng, to whom I am much obliged for granting me permission to introduce it in my work.

"Dear sir,—Since I saw you, I have had a long conversation with Cawston[2], who sat up with Dr. Johnson, from nine o'clock on Sunday evening, till ten o'clock on Monday morning. And, from what I can gather from him, it should seem, that Dr. Johnson was perfectly composed, steady in hope, and resigned to death. At the interval of each hour, they assisted him to sit up in his bed, and move his legs, which were in much pain; when he regularly addressed himself to fervent prayer; and though, sometimes, his voice failed him, his sense never did, during that time. The only sustenance he received was cider and water. He said his mind was prepared, and the time to his dissolution seemed long. At six in the morning, he inquired the hour, and, on being informed, said, that all went on regularly, and he felt he had but a few hours to live.

"At ten o' clock in the morning, he parted from Cawston, saying, 'You should not detain Mr. Windham's servant:—I thank you; bear my remembrance to your master.' Cawston says, that no man could appear more collected, more devout, or less terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute.

"This account, which is so much more agreeable than, and somewhat different from, yours, has given us the satisfaction of thinking that that great man died as he lived, full of resignation, strengthened in faith, and joyful in hope[3]."

After making one will, which, as Sir

[1] The change of his sentiments with regard to Dr. Clarke is thus mentioned to me in a letter from the late Dr. Adams, master of Pembroke college, Oxford.—"The Doctor's prejudices were the strongest, and certainly in another sense the weakest, that ever possessed a sensible man. You know his extreme zeal for orthodoxy. But did you ever hear what he told me himself? that he had made it a rule not to admit Dr. Clarke's name in his Dictionary. This, however, wore off. At some distance of time he advised with me what books he should read in defence of the christian religion. I recommended 'Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,' as the best of the kind; and I find in what is called his 'Prayers and Meditations,' that he was frequently employed in the latter part of his time in reading Clarke's Sermons."—Boswell.

[2] Servant to the Right Honourable William Windham.—Boswell.

[3] [The quantity of evidence now brought together as to the state of Dr. Johnson's mind with regard to religion in general, and his own salvation in particular, dispenses the Editor from making any observations on the subject; but those who may wish to see a commentary on the facts, may turn to the remarks in the Christian Observer for October and November, 1827 —Ed.]

John Hawkins informs us, extended no further than the promised annuity[1], Johnson's final disposition of his property was established by a will and codicil, of which copies are subjoined.

"In the name of God. Amen. I, Samuel Johnson, being in full possession of my faculties, but fearing this night may put an end to my life, do ordain this my last will and testament. I bequeath to God a soul polluted by many sins, but I hope purified by Jesus Christ. I leave seven hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Bennet Langton, Esq.; three hundred pounds in the hands of Mr. Barclay and Mr. Perkins, brewers; one hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore[2]; one thousand pounds, three per cent. annuities in the publick funds; and one hundred pounds now lying by me in ready money: all these before-mentioned sums and property I leave, I say, to Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, of Doctor's Commons, in trust, for the following uses:—That is to say, to pay to the representatives of the late William Innys, bookseller, in St. Paul's Churchyard, the sum of two hundred pounds: to Mrs. White, my female servant, one hundred pounds stock in the three per cent. annuities aforesaid. The rest of the aforesaid sums of money and property, together with my books, plate, and household furniture, I leave to the before-mentioned Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, also in trust, to be applied, after paying my debts, to the use of Francis Barber, my man-servant, a negro, in such manner as they shall judge most fit and available to his benefit. And I appoint the aforesaid Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, sole executors of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills and testaments whatever. In witness whereof I hereunto subscribe my name, and affix my seal, this eighth day of December, 1784. "SAM. JOHNSON, (L. S.)

"Signed, sealed, published, declared, and delivered, by the said testator, as his last will and testament, in the presence of us, the word *two* being first inserted in the opposite page.

"GEORGE STRAHAN.
"JOHN DESMOULINS."

"By way of codicil to my last will and testament, I, Samuel Johnson, give, devise, and bequeath, my messuage or tenement situate at Lichfield, in the county of Stafford, with the appurtenances in the tenure and occupation of Mrs. Bond, of Lichfield, aforesaid, or of Mr. Hinchman, her undertenant, to my executors, in trust, to sell and dispose of the same; and the money arising from such sale I give and bequeath as follows, viz. to Thomas and Benjamin, the sons of Fisher Johnson, late of Leicester, and ——— Whiting, daughter of Thomas Johnson, late of Coventry, and the granddaughter of the said Thomas Johnson, one full and equal fourth part each; but in case there shall be more grand-daughters than one of the said Thomas Johnson, living at the time of my decease, I give and bequeath the part or share of that one to and equally between such grand-daughters. I give and bequeath to the Rev. Mr. Rogers, of Berkley, near Froom, in the county of Somerset, the sum of one hundred pounds requesting him to apply the same towards the maintenance of Elizabeth Herne, a lunatick. I also give and bequeath to my god-children, the son and daughter of Mauritius Lowe, painter, each of them one hundred pounds of my stock in the three per cent. consolidated annuities, to be applied and disposed of by and at the discretion of my executors, in the education or settlement in the world of them my said legatees. Also I give and bequeath to Sir John Hawkins, one of my executors, the Annales Ecclesiastici of Baronius, and Holinshead's and Stowe's Chronicles, and also an octavo Common Prayer-Book. To Bennet Langton, Esq. I give and bequeath my Polyglot Bible. To Sir Joshua Reynolds, my great French Dictionary, by Martiniere, and my own copy of my folio English Dictionary, of the last revision. To Dr. William Scott, one of my executors, the Dictionnaire de Commerce, and Lectius's edition of the Greek Poets[3]. To Mr. Windham, Poetæ Græci Heroici per Henricum Stephanum. To the Rev. Mr. Strahan, vicar of Islington, in Middlesex, Mill's Greek Testament, Beza's Greek Testament, by Stephens, all my Latin Bibles, and my Greek Bible, by Wechelius. To Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshanks, the surgeon who attended me, Mr. Holder, my apothecary, Gerard Hamilton, Esq. Mrs. Gardiner, of Snow hill, Mrs. Frances Reynolds, Mr. Hoole, and the Reverend Mr. Hoole, his son, each a book at their election, to keep as a token of remembrance. I also give and bequeath to Mr. John Desmoulins, two hundred

[1] [See *ante*, p. 435.—ED.]

[2] ['The following receipt, all in Johnson's writing, was found in Doctor Percy's papers by Mr. Shaw Mason.

"Memorandum.—I have received one year's interest of one hundred and fifty pounds lent in —— to Dr. Percy. "SAM. JOHNSON"
"April 26, 1782."—ED.]

[3] [Poeta Greci Veteres carminis historici Scriptores qui extant omnes. *Gr. Lat.* curâ et recensione Jac. Lectii. *fol.* 1606 ED.]

pounds consolidated three per cent. annuities; and to Mr. Sastres, the Italian master, the sum of five pounds, to be laid out in books of piety for his own use. And whereas the said Bennet Langton hath agreed, in consideration of the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds, mentioned in my will to be in his hands, to grant and secure an annuity of seventy pounds payable during the life of me and my servant, Francis Barber, and the life of the survivor of us, to Mr. George Stubbs, in trust for us; my mind and will is, that in case of my decease before the said agreement shall be perfected, the said sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds, and the bond for securing the said sum, shall go to the said Francis Barber; and I hereby give and bequeath to him the same, in lieu of the bequest in his favour, contained in my said will. And I hereby empower my executors to deduct and retain all expenses that shall or may be incurred in the execution of my said will, or of this codicil thereto, out of such estate and effects as I shall die possessed of. All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate and effects I give and bequeath to my said executors, in trust for the said Francis Barber, his executors, and administrators. Witness my hand and seal, this 9th day of December, 1784.

"SAM. JOHNSON, (L. S.)

"Signed, sealed, published, declared, and delivered, by the said Samuel Johnson, as, and for a codicil to his last will and testament, in the presence of us, who, in his presence, and at his request, and also in the presence of each other, have hereto subscribed our names as witnesses.

"JOHN COPLEY.
"WILLIAM GIBSON.
"HENRY COLE."

Upon these testamentary deeds it is proper to make a few observations. His express declaration with his dying breath as a Christian, as it had been often practised in such solemn writings, was of real consequence from this great man; for the conviction of a mind equally acute and strong might well overbalance the doubts of others who were his contemporaries. The expression *polluted* may, to some, convey an impression of more than ordinary contamination; but that is not warranted by its genuine meaning, as appears from "The Rambler," No. 42[1]. The same word is used in the will of Dr. Sanderson, bishop of Lincoln, who was piety itself. His legacy of two hundred pounds to the representatives of Mr. Innys, bookseller, in St. Paul's Churchyard, proceeded from a very worthy motive. He told Sir. John Hawkins that his father having become a bankrupt, Mr. Innys had assisted him with money or credit to continue his business. "This," said he, "I consider as an obligation on me to be grateful to his descendants." The amount of his property proved to be considerably more than he had supposed it to be. Sir John Hawkins estimates the bequest to Francis Barber at a sum little short of fifteen hundred pounds, including an annuity of seventy pounds to be paid to him by Mr. Langton, in consideration of seven hundred and fifty pounds, which Johnson had lent to that gentleman. Sir John seems not a little angry at this bequest, and mutters "a caveat against ostentatious bounty and favour to negroes." But surely, when a man has money entirely of his own acquisition, especially when he has no near relations, he may, without blame, dispose of it as he pleases, and with great propriety to a faithful servant. Mr. Barber, by the recommendation of his master, retired to Lichfield, where he might pass the rest of his days in comfort[2]. It has been objected that Johnson has omitted many of his best friends, when leaving books to several as tokens of his last remembrance. The names of Dr. Adams, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Burney, Mr. Hector, Mr. Murphy, the authour of this work, and others who were intimate with him, are not to be found in his will. This may be accounted for by considering, that as he was very near his dissolution at the time, he probably mentioned such as happened to occur to him; and that he may have recollected, that he had formerly shown others such proofs of his regard, that it was not necessary to crowd his will with their names. Mrs. Lucy Porter was much displeased that nothing was left to her; but besides what I have now stated, she should have considered that she had left nothing to Johnson by her will, which was

[1] [The quotations from the scriptures, in Johnson's Dictionary sufficiently justify the use of this word; but it does not occur in No. 42 of the Rambler. In the Journey to the Hebrides he uses the word familiarly, and talks of "polluting the breakfast table with slices of cheese." Mr. Boswell may perhaps have meant "The Idler, No. 82," where Johnson added to Sir Joshua Reynolds's paper the words, "and *pollute* his canvas with deformity."—ED.]

[2] Francis Barber, Dr. Johnson's principal legatee, died in the infirmary at Stafford, after undergoing a painful operation, February 13, 1801.—MALONE. [In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1793, p. 619, there are some anecdotes of Barber, in which it is said that he was then forty-eight years old. Mr. Chalmers thinks that he was about fifty-six when he died; but as he entered Johnson's service in 1752, and could scarcely have been then under twelve or fourteen years of age, it is probable that he was somewhat older. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 250.—ED.]

made during his lifetime, as appeared at her decease. His enumerating several persons in one group, and leaving them "each a book at their election," might possibly have given occasion to a curious question as to the order of choice, had they not luckily fixed on different books. His library, though by no means handsome in its appearance, was sold by Mr. Christie for two hundred and forty-seven pounds, nine shillings: many people being desirous to have a book which had belonged to Johnson[1]. In many of them he had written little notes: sometimes tender memorials of his departed wife; as "This was dear Tetty's book:" sometimes occasional remarks of different sorts. Mr. Lysons, of Clifford's-inn, has favoured me with the two following: "In 'Holy Rules and Helps to Devotion, by Bryan Duppa, Lord Bishop of Winton, '*Preces quidam videtur diligenter tractasse; spero non inauditus.*' In 'The Rosicrucian infallible Axiomata, by John Heydon, Gent.,' prefixed to which are some verses addressed to the authour, signed Ambr. Waters, A. M. Coll. Ex. Oxon. 'These Latin verses were written to Hobbes by Bathurst, upon his Treatise on Human Nature, and have no relation to the book.—An odd fraud.'"

A few days before his death, he had asked Sir John Hawkins, as one of his executors, where he should be buried; and on being answered, "Doubtless, in Westminster-Abbey," seemed to feel a satisfaction, very natural to a poet; and indeed in my opinion very natural to every man of any imagination, who has no family sepulchre in which he can be laid with his fathers. Accordingly, upon Monday, December 20, his remains, [enclosed in a leaden coffin,] were deposited in that noble and renowned edifice, [in the south transept, near the foot of Shakspeare's monument, and close to the coffin of his friend Garrick;] and over his grave was placed a large blue flag-stone, with this inscription:

Hawk. p. 564.

"Samuel Johnson, LL.D.
Obiit xiii. die Decembris,
Anno Domini
M. DCC. LXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV."

His funeral was attended by a respectable number of his friends, particularly such of the members of The Literary Club as were in town; and was also honoured with the presence of several of the Reverend Chapter of Westminster[2]. Mr. Burke, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Windham, Mr. Langton, Sir Charles Bunbury, and Mr. Colman, bore his pall. His school-fellow, Dr. Taylor, performed the mournful office of reading the burial service.

I trust I shall not be accused of affectation, when I declare, that I find myself unable to express all that I felt upon the loss of such a "guide, philosopher and friend[3]." I shall, therefore, not say one word of my own, but adopt those of an eminent friend[4], which he uttered with an abrupt felicity, superiour to all studied compositions:—"He has made a chasm, which not only nothing can fill up, but which nothing has a tendency to fill up.—Johnson is dead.—Let us go to the next best: there is nobody; no man can be said to put you in mind of Johnson."

As Johnson had abundant homage paid to him during his life[5], so no writer in this

[1] [Mr. Windham bought Markland's Statius, and wrote in the first page, "*Fuit e libris clarissimi Samuelis Johnson.*" It now, by the favour of Mr. Jesse, who bought it at Mr. Windham's sale, belongs to the Editor.—Ed.]

[2] ["It must be told, that a dissatisfaction was expressed in the public papers that he was not buried with all possible funeral rites and honours. In all processions and solemnities something will be forgotten or omitted. Here no disrespect was intended. The executors did not think themselves justified in doing more than they did; for only a little cathedral service, accompanied with lights and music, would have raised the price of interment. In this matter fees ran high; they could not be excused; and the expenses were to be paid from the property of the deceased. His funeral expenses amounted to more than two hundred pounds. Future monumental charges may be defrayed by the generosity of subscription."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1785, p. 911, probably by Mr. Tyers.—Ed.]

[3] On the subject of Johnson I may adopt the words of Sir John Harrington concerning his venerable tutor and diocesan, Dr. John Still, Bishop of Bath and Wells: "who hath given me some helps, more hopes, all encouragements in my best studies: to whom I never came but I grew more religious; from whom I never went, but I parted better instructed. Of him, therefore, my acquaintance, my friend, my instructer, if I speak much, it were not to be marvelled; if I speak frankly, it is not to be blamed; and though I speak partially, it were to be pardoned."—"Nugæ Antiquæ," vol. i. p. 136. There is one circumstance in Sir John's character of Bishop Still, which is peculiarly applicable to Johnson: "He became so famous a disputer, that the learnedest were even afraid to dispute with him; and he, finding his own strength, could not stick to warn them in their arguments to take heed to their answers, like a perfect fencer that will tell aforehand in which button he will give the venew, or like a cunning chess-player that will appoint aforehand with which pawn and in what place he will give the mate." *Ibid.*—Boswell.

[4] The late Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton, who had been intimately acquainted with Dr. Johnson near thirty years. He died in London, July 16, 1796, in his sixty-eighth year.—Malone.

[5] Beside the Dedications to him by Dr. Goldsmith, the Reverend Dr. Franklin, and the Reverend Mr Wilson, which I have mentioned ac-

nation ever had such an accumulation of literary honours after his death. A sermon upon that event was preached in St. Mary's church, Oxford, before the University, by the Rev. Mr. Agutter, of Magdalen College [1]. The Lives, the Memoirs, the Essays, both in prose and verse, which have been published concerning him, would make many volumes. The numerous attacks too upon him I consider as part of his consequence, upon the principle which he himself so well knew and asserted. Many who trembled at his presence were forward in assault, when they no longer apprehended danger. When one of his little pragmatical foes was invidiously snarling at his fame, at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, the Reverend Dr. Parr exclaimed, with his usual bold animation, "Ay, now that the old lion is dead, every ass thinks he may kick at him."

A monument for him, in Westminster Abbey, was resolved upon soon after his death, and was supported by a most respectable contribution; but the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's having come to a resolution of admitting monuments there, upon a liberal and magnificent plan, that cathedral was afterwards fixed on, as the place in which a cenotaph should be erected to his memory: and in the cathedral of his native city of Lichfield, a smaller one is to be erected [2]. To compose his epitaph, could not but excite the warmest competition of genius. If *laudari à laudato viro* be praise which is highly estimable, I should not forgive myself were I to omit the following sepulchral verses on the authour of THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY, written by the Right Honourable Henry Flood [3]:

"No need of Latin or of Greek to grace
Our JOHNSON's memory, or inscribe his grave;
His native language claims this mournful space,
To pay the immortality he gave."

The Reverend Dr. Parr, on being requested to undertake the inscription for the monument, thus expressed himself in a letter to William Seward, Esq.: "I leave this mighty task to some hardier and some abler writer. The variety and splendour of Johnson's attainments, the peculiarities of his character, his private virtues, and his literary publications, fill me with confusion and dismay, when I reflect upon the confined and difficult species of composition, in which alone they can be expressed, with propriety, upon his monument." But I understand that this great scholar, and warm admirer of Johnson, has yielded to repeated solicitations, and executed the very difficult undertaking.

[Dr. Johnson's monument, consisting of a colossal figure leaning against a column (but not very strongly resembling him), has since the death of Mr. Boswell been placed in St. Paul's cathedral, having been first opened to publick view, February 23, 1796. The epitaph was written by the Rev. Dr. Parr, and is as follows: Malone.

cording to their dates, there was one by a lady, of a versification of "Aningait and Ajut," and one by the ingenious Mr. Walker, of his "Rhetorical Grammar." I have introduced into this work several compliments paid to him in the writings of his contemporaries; but the number of them is so great, that we may fairly say that there was almost a general tribute. Let me not be forgetful of the honour done to him by Colonel Myddleton, of Gwaynynog, near Denbigh; who, on the banks of a rivulet in his park, where Johnson delighted to stand and repeat verses, erected an urn with the inscription given *ante*, vol. i. p. 490.—BOSWELL.

[Here followed an account of the various portraits of Dr. Johnson, which is transferred to the appendix.—ED.]

1 It is not yet published. In a letter to me, Mr. Agutter says, "My sermon before the university was more engaged with Dr. Johnson's *moral* than his *intellectual* character. It particularly examined his fear of death, and suggested several reasons for the apprehensions of the good, and the indifference of the infidel, in their last hours; this was illustrated by contrasting the death of Dr. Johnson and Mr. Hume: the text was, Job, xxi. 22—26."—BOSWELL.

2 This monument has been since erected. It consists of a medallion, with a tablet beneath, on which is this inscription:

"The friends of SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
A Native of Lichfield,
Erected this monument,
As a tribute of respect
To the Memory of a man of extensive learning,
A distinguished moral writer, and a sincere Christian.
He died Dec. 13, 1784, aged 75."—MALONE.

3 To prevent any misconception on this subject, Mr. Malone, by whom these lines were obligingly communicated, requests me to add the following remark:

"In justice to the late Mr. Flood, now himself wanting, and highly meriting, an epitaph from his country, to which his transcendent talents did the highest honour, as well as the most important service, it should be observed, that these lines were by no means intended as a regular monumental inscription for Dr. Johnson. Had he undertaken to write an appropriate and discriminative epitaph for that excellent and extraordinary man, those who knew Mr. Flood's vigour of mind will have no doubt that he would have produced one worthy of his illustrious subject. But the fact was merely this: In December, 1789, after a large subscription had been made for Dr. Johnson's monument, to which Mr. Flood liberally contributed, Mr. Malone happened to call on him at his house in Berners street, and the conversation turning on the proposed monument, Mr. Malone maintained that the epitaph, by whomsoever it should be written, ought to be in Latin. Mr. Flood thought differently. The next morning, in a postcript to a note on another subject, he mentioned that he continued of the same opinion as on the preceding day, and subjoined the lines above given."—BOSWELL.

A ☧ Ω
SAMVELI · IOHNSON
GRAMMATICO · ET · CRITICO
SCRIPTORVM · ANGLICORVM · LITTERATE
PERITO · POETAE · LVMINIBVS ·
SENTENTIARVM · ET PONDERIBVS · VERBORVM
ADMIRABILI · MAGISTRO · VIRTVTIS
GRAVISSIMO · HOMINI · OPTIMO · ET
SINGVLARIS · EXEMPLI

QVI · VIXIT · ANN · LXXV · MENS · II. · DIEB · XIIII.
DECESSIT · IDIB · DECEMBR · ANN · CHRIST
CIↃ . IↃCC · LXXXIIII.
SEPVLT · IN · AED · SANCT · PETR · WESTMO-
NASTERIENS · XII · KAL · IANVAR · ANN · CHRIST
CIↃ · IↃCC · LXXXV.
AMICI · ET · SODALES · LITTERARII
PECVNIA · CONLATA
H · M · FACIVND · CVRAVER.

On a scroll in his hand are the following words:

ΕΝΜΑΚΑΡΕΣΣΙΠΟΝΩΝΑΝΤΑΞΙΟΣΕΙΗΑΜΟΙΒΗ [1]

On one side of the monument:

FACIEBAT JOHANNES BACON, SCVLPTOR ANN. CHRIST. M.D.CC.LXXXV.

The subscription for this monument, which cost eleven hundred guineas, was begun by the Literary Club, and completed [2] by the aid of Dr. Johnson's other friends and admirers.]

[1] It is to be regretted that the committee for erecting this monument did not adhere to the principles of the *Round Robin*, on the subject of Goldsmith's epitaph, (*ante*, p. 80), and insist on having the epitaph to Johnson written in the language to which he had been so great and so very peculiar a benefactor. The committee of subscribers, called *curators*, were Lord Stowell, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Boswell, and Mr. Malone. Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Burke, and Sir Joseph had signed the *Round Robin;* but it may be presumed that Dr. Johnson's preference of a Latin epitaph, so *positively pronounced* on that occasion, operated on their minds as an expression of what his wishes would have been as to his own. It seems, however, to the Editor the height of bad taste and absurdity to exhibit Dr. Johnson in St. Paul's cathedral in the masquerade of a half naked Roman, with such pedantic, and, to the passing public, unintelligible inscriptions as the above. The following is a close translation:

Alpha. ☧ *Omega.*
To SAMUEL JOHNSON,
A grammarian and critic
Of great skill in English literature;
poet admirable for the light of his sentences
And the weight of his words;
A most effective teacher of virtue;
An excellent man, and of singular example,
Who lived 75 years, 2 months, 14 days.
He died in the ides of December, in the year of Christ,
MDCCLXXXIV.
Was buried in the church of St. Peter's, Westminster,
The 13th of the kalends of January, in the year of Christ,
MDCCLXXXIV.
His literary friends and companions,
By a collection of money,
Caused this monument to be made.

The reader will not of course attribute to the original all the awkwardness of this almost literal version; but he will not fail to observe the tedious and confused mode of marking the numerals, the unnecessary repetition of them, and the introduction of *nones* and *ides*, all of which are, even on the principles of the Lapidarian scholars themselves, clumsy, and on the principles of common sense, contemptible. Thirty-four letters and numerals (nearly a tenth part of the whole inscription) are, for instance, expended in letting posterity know that Dr. Johnson was *buried* in the same month of the same year in which he *died*.

The Greek words, so pedantically jumbled together on the scroll, are an alteration by Dr. Parr of a line of Dionysius, the geographer, with which Johnson has closed the Rambler. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 93. It seems, that in deference to some apprehensions that the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's might think the Αυτων εκ μακαρων ανταξιος ειη αμοιβε—*from the blessed gods may he receive his merited reward*—somewhat heathenish, Dr. Parr was persuaded to convert the line into Εν μακαρεσσι πονων ανταξιος ειη αμοιβη—*may he receive amongst the blessed the merited reward of his labours*. The reader who is curious about the pompous inanities of literature will find at the end of the fourth volume of Dr. Parr's works, ed. 1828, a long correspondence between Parr, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Malone, and other friends of Dr. Johnson, on the subject of this epitaph. He will be amused at the burlesque importance which Parr attaches to epitaph-writing, the tenacity with which he endeavoured to describe Dr. Johnson, with reference to his poetical character as *poeta probabilis*, and his candid avowal, that in the composition he was thinking more of his own character than Dr. Johnson's. —ED.]

[2] [After much delay and very great difficulty, as appears by many reproachful notices and complaints in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. ED.]

The character of SAMUEL JOHNSON has, I trust, been so developed in the course of this work, that they who have honoured it with a perusal may be considered as well acquainted with him. As however it may be expected that I should collect into one view the capital and distinguishing features of this extraordinary man, I shall endeavour to acquit myself of that part of my biographical undertaking [3], however difficult it may be to do that which many of my readers will do better for themselves.

His figure was large and well formed, and his countenance of the cast of an ancient statue; yet his appearance was rendered strange and somewhat uncouth, by convulsive cramps, by the scars of that distemper which it was once imagined the royal touch could cure, and by a slovenly mode of dress. He had the use only of one eye; yet so much does mind govern, and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his visual perceptions, as far as they extended, were un-

[3] As I do not see any reason to give a different character of my illustrious friend now from what I formerly gave, the greatest part of the sketch of him in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" is here adopted.—BOSWELL.

commonly quick and accurate. So morbid was his temperament, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs: when he walked, it was like the struggling gait of one in fetters; when he rode, he had no command or direction of his horse, but was carried as if in a balloon. That with his constitution and habits of life he should have lived seventy-five years, is a proof that an inherent *vivida vis* is a powerful preservative of the human frame.

Man is, in general, made up of contradictory qualities; and these will ever show themselves in strange succession, where a consistency in appearance at least, if not reality, has not been attained by long habits of philosophical discipline. In proportion to the native vigour of the mind, the contradictory qualities will be more prominent, and more difficult to be adjusted; and, therefore, we are not to wonder that Johnson exhibited an eminent example of this remark, which I have made upon human nature. At different times he seemed a different man in some respects; not, however, in any great or essential article, upon which he had fully employed his mind, and settled certain principles of duty, but only in his manners, and in the display of argument and fancy in his talk. He was prone to superstition, but not to credulity. Though his imagination might incline him to a belief of the marvellous and the mysterious, his vigorous reason examined the evidence with jealousy. He was a sincere and zealous christian, of high church of England and monarchical principles, which he would not tamely suffer to be questioned; and had, perhaps, at an early period, narrowed his mind somewhat too much, both as to religion and politicks. His being impressed with the danger of extreme latitude in either, though he was of a very independent spirit, occasioned his appearing somewhat unfavourable to the prevalence of that noble freedom of sentiment which is the best possession of man. Nor can it be denied that he had many prejudices; which, however, frequently suggested many of his pointed sayings, that rather show a playfulness of fancy than any settled malignity. He was steady and inflexible in maintaining the obligations of religion and morality; both from a regard for the order of society and from a veneration for the Great Source of all order; correct, nay stern in his taste; hard to please, and easily offended; impetuous and irritable in his temper, but of a most humane and benevolent heart [1], which showed itself not only in a most liberal charity, as far as his circumstances would allow, but in a thousand instances of active benevolence. He was afflicted with a bodily disease, which made him often restless and fretful, and with a constitutional melancholy, the clouds of which darkened the brightness of his fancy, and gave a gloomy cast to his whole course of thinking: we, therefore, ought not to wonder at his sallies of impatience and passion at any time, especially when provoked by obtrusive ignorance or presuming petulance, and allowance must be made for his uttering hasty and satirical sallies even against his best friends. And, surely, when it is considered, that, "amidst sickness and sorrow," he exerted his faculties in so many works for the benefit of mankind, and particularly that he achieved the great and admirable Dictionary of our language, we must be astonished at his resolution. The solemn text, "of him to whom much is given much will be required," seems to have been ever present to his mind, in a rigorous sense, and to have made him dissatisfied with his labours and acts of goodness, however comparatively great; so that the unavoidable consciousness of his superiority was, in that respect, a cause of disquiet. He suffered so much from this, and from the gloom which perpetually haunted him, and made solitude frightful, that it may be said of him, "If in this life only he had hope, he was of all men most miserable." He loved praise when it was brought to him; but was too proud to seek for it. He was somewhat susceptible of flattery. As he was general and unconfined in his studies, he cannot be considered as master of any one particular science; but he had accumulated a vast and various collection of learning and knowledge, which was so arranged in his mind as to be ever in readiness to be brought forth. But his superiority over other learned men consisted chiefly in what may be called the art of thinking, the art of using his mind; a certain continual power of seizing the useful substance of all that he knew, and exhibiting it in a clear and forcible manner; so that knowledge, which we often see to be no better than lumber in men of dull understanding, was in him true, evident, and actual wisdom. His moral precepts are practical; for they are drawn from an intimate acquaintance with human nature. His maxims carry conviction; for they are founded on the basis of common sense, and a very attentive and minute survey of real life. His mind was so full of imagery that he might have been perpetu-

[1] In the "Olla Podrida," a collection of essays published at Oxford, there is an admirable paper upon the character of Johnson, written by the Reverend Dr. Horne, the late excellent Bishop of Norwich. The following passage is eminently happy:—"To reject wisdom, because the person of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant; what is it, but to throw away a pine-apple, and assign for a reason the roughness of its coat?"—BOSWELL.

ally a poet; yet it is remarkable, that however rich his prose is in this respect, his poetical pieces in general have not much of that splendour, but are rather distinguished by strong sentiment and acute observation, conveyed in harmonious and energetick verse, particularly in heroick couplets. Though usually grave, and even awful in his deportment, he possessed uncommon and peculiar powers of wit and humour; he frequently indulged himself in colloquial pleasantry; and the heartiest merriment was often enjoyed in his company; with this great advantage, that, as it was entirely free from any poisonous tincture of vice or impiety, it was salutary to those who shared in it. He had accustomed himself to such accuracy in his common conversation[1], that he at all times expressed his thoughts with great force, and an elegant choice of language, the effect of which was aided by his having a loud voice, and a slow deliberate utterance. In him were united a most logical head with a most fertile imagination, which gave him an extraordinary advantage in arguing: for he could reason close or wide, as he saw best for the moment. Exulting in his intellectual strength and dexterity, he could, when he pleased, be the greatest sophist that ever contended in the list of declamation; and, from a spirit of contradiction, and a delight in showing his powers, he would often maintain the wrong side with equal warmth and ingenuity; so that, when there was an audience, his real opinions could seldom be gathered from his talk; though when he was in company with a single friend, he would discuss a subject with genuine fairness; but he was too conscientious to make errour permanent and pernicious, by deliberately writing it; and, in all his numerous works, he earnestly inculcated what appeared to him to be the truth; his piety being constant, and the ruling principle of all his conduct.

Such was Samuel Johnson, a man whose talents, acquirements, and virtues, were so extraordinary, that the more his character is considered, the more he will be regarded by the present age, and by posterity, with admiration and reverence.

I shall now fulfil my promise of exhibiting specimens of various sorts of imitation of Johnson's style[2].

In the "Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, 1787," there is an "Essay on the Style of Dr. Samuel Johnson," by the Reverend Robert Burrowes, whose respect for the great object of his criticism[3] is thus evinced in the concluding paragraph: "I have singled him out from the whole body of English writers, because his universally-acknowledged beauties would be most apt to induce imitation: and I have treated

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1 Though a perfect resemblance of Johnson is not to be found in any age, parts of his character are admirably expressed by Clarendon, in drawing that of Lord Falkland, whom the noble and masterly historian describes at his seat near Oxford: "Such an immenseness of wit, such a solidity of judgment, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination. His acquaintance was cultivated by the most polite and accurate men, so that his house was an university in less volume, whither they came, not so much for repose as study, and to examine and refine those grosser propositions which laziness and consent made current in conversation." Bayle's account of Menage may also be quoted as exceedingly applicable to the great subject of this work. "His illustrious friends erected a very glorious monument to him in the collection entitled 'Menagiana.' Those who judge of things right will confess that this collection is very proper to show the extent of genius and learning which was the character of Menage. And I may be bold to say, that *the excellent works he published will not distinguish him from other learned men so advantageously as this.* To publish books of great learning, to make Greek and Latin verses exceedingly well turned is not a common talent, I own; neither is it extremely rare. It is incomparably more difficult to find men who can furnish discourse about an infinite number of things, and who can diversify them a hundred ways. How many authours are there who are admired for their works, on account of the vast learning that is displayed in them, who are not able to sustain a conversation. Those who know Menage only by his books might think he resembled those learned men; but if you show the 'Menagiana' you distinguish him from them, and make him known by a talent which is given to very few learned men. There it appears that he was a man who spoke off-hand a thousand good things. His memory extended to what was ancient and modern; to the court and to the city; to the dead and to the living languages; to things serious and things jocose; in a word, to a thousand sorts of subjects. That which appeared a trifle to some readers of the 'Menagiana,' who did not consider circumstances, caused admiration in other readers, who minded the difference between what a man speaks without preparation and that which he prepares for the press. And, therefore, we cannot sufficiently commend the care which his illustrious friends took to erect a monument so capable of giving him immortal glory. They were not obliged to rectify what they had heard him say; for, in so doing, they had not been faithful historians of his conversation."—Boswell.

2 [Transposed from p. 431, *ante*.—Ed.]

3 We must smile at a little inaccuracy of metaphor in the preface to the Transactions, which is written by Mr. Burrowes. The *critick of the style of* Johnson having, with a just zeal for literature, observed, that the whole nation are called on to exert themselves, afterwards says, "They are *called on* by every *tye* which can have laudable influence on the heart of man."—Boswell. [See *ante* vol. i. p. 89.—Ed.]

rather on his faults, than his perfections, because an essay might comprise all the observations I could make upon his faults, while volumes would not be sufficient for a treatise on his perfections."

Mr. Burrowes has analyzed the composition of Johnson, and pointed out its peculiarities with much acuteness; and I would recommend a careful perusal of his Essay to those who, being captivated by the union of perspicuity and splendour which the writings of Johnson contain, without having a sufficient portion of his vigour of mind, may be in danger of becoming bad copyists of his manner. I, however, cannot but observe, and I observe it to his credit, that this learned gentleman has himself caught no mean degree of the expansion and harmony which, independent of all other circumstances, characterise the sentences of Johnson. Thus, in the preface to the volume in which the Essay appears, we find,

"If it be said that in societies of this sort too much attention is frequently bestowed on subjects barren and speculative, it may be answered, that no one science is so little connected with the rest as not to afford many principles whose use may extend considerably beyond the science to which they primarily belong, and that no proposition is so purely theoretical as to be totally incapable of being applied to practical purposes. There is no apparent connexion between duration and the cycloidal arch, the properties of which duly attended to have furnished us with our best-regulated methods of measuring time: and he who had made himself master of the nature and affections of the logarithmic curve is not aware that he has advanced considerably towards ascertaining the proportionable density of the air at its various distances from the surface of the earth."

The ludicrous imitators of Johnson's style are innumerable. Their general method is to accumulate hard words, without considering, that, although he was fond of introducing them occasionally, there is not a single sentence in all his writings where they are crowded together, as in the first verse of the following imaginary Ode by him to Mrs. Thrale [1], which appeared in the newspapers:

"*Cervisial coctor's viduate* dame,
Opins't thou this gigantick frame
Procumbing at thy shrine,
Shall, *catenated* by thy charms,
A captive in thy *ambient* arms,
Perennially be thine?"

This and a thousand other such attempts are totally unlike the original, which the writers imagined they were turning into ridicule. There is not similarity enough for burlesque, or even for caricature.

Mr. Colman, in his "Prose on several occasions," has "A Letter from Lexiphanes, containing Proposals for a *Glossary* or *Vocabulary* of the *Vulgar Tongue;* intended as a Supplement to a larger Dictionary." It is evidently meant as a sportive sally of ridicule on Johnson, whose style is thus imitated, without being grossly overcharged:

"It is easy to foresee that the idle and illiterate will complain that I have increased their labours by endeavouring to diminish them; and that I have explained what is more easy by what is more difficult—*ignotum per ignotius.* I expect, on the other hand, the liberal acknowledgments of the learned. He who is buried in scholastick retirement, secluded from the assemblies of the gay, and remote from the circles of the polite, will at once comprehend the definitions, and be grateful for such a seasonable and necessary elucidation of his mother-tongue."

Annexed to this letter is the following short specimen of the work, thrown together in a vague and desultory manner not even adhering to alphabetical concatenation.

"HIGGLEDY PIGGLEDY,—Conglomeration and confusion.

"HODGE-PODGE,—A culinary mixture of heterogeneous ingredients: applied metaphorically to all discordant combinations.

"TIT FOR TAT,—Adequate retaliation.

"SHILLY SHALLY,—Hesitation and irresolution.

"FEE! FA! FUM!—Gigantick intonations.

"RIGMAROLE,—Discourse, incoherent and rhapsodical.

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[1] Johnson's wishing to unite himself with this rich widow was much talked of, but I believe without foundation. The report, however, gave occasion to a poem, not without characteristical merit, entitled "Ode to Mrs. Thrale, by Samuel Johnson, LL.D. on their supposed approaching Nuptials:" printed for Mr. Faulder in Bond-street. I shall quote as a specimen the first three stanzas:

"If e'er my fingers touch'd the lyre,
In satire fierce, in pleasure gay,
Shall not my Thralia's smiles inspire?
Shall Sam refuse the sportive lay?

"My dearest lady! view your slave,
Behold him as your very *Scrub;*
Eager to write as authour grave,
Or govern well—the brewing tub.

"To rich felicity thus raised,
My bosom glows with amorous fire.
Porter no longer shall be praised;
'Tis I myself am *Thrale's entire.*"

BOSWELL

[Mrs. Carter, in one of her letters to Mrs. Montague, says, "I once saw him (*Dr. Johnson*) very *indigné* when somebody jested about Mrs. Thrale's marrying himself. The choice would, no doubt, have been singular, but much less exceptionable than that which she has made."—*Mrs. Carter's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 211.—ED.]

"CRINCUM-CRANCUM,—Lines of irregularity and involution.

"DING DONG,—Tintinabulary chimes, used metaphorically to signify despatch and vehemence 1."

The serious imitators of Johnson's style, whether intentionally or by the imperceptible effect of its strength and animation, are, as I have had already occasion to observe, so many, that I might introduce quotations from a numerous body of writers in our language, since he appeared in the literary world. I shall point out the following:

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D. D.

"In other parts of the globe, man, in his rudest state, appears as lord of the creation, giving law to various tribes of animals which he has tamed and reduced to subjection. The Tartar follows his prey on the horse which he has reared, or tends his numerous herds which furnish him both with food and clothing; the Arab has rendered the camel docile, and avails himself of its persevering strength; the Laplander has formed the rein-deer to be subservient to his will; and even the people of Kamschatka have trained their dogs to labour. This command over the inferiour creatures is one of the noblest prerogatives of man, and among the greatest efforts of his wisdom and power. Without this, his dominion is incomplete. He is a monarch who has no subjects; a master without servants; and must perform every operation by the strength of his own arm 2."

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.

"Of all our passions and appetites, the love of power is of the most imperious and unsociable nature, since the pride of one man requires the submission of the multitude. In the tumult of civil discord the laws of society lose their force, and their place is seldom supplied by those of humanity. The ardour of contention, the pride of victory, the despair of success, the memory of past injuries, and the fear of future dangers, all contribute to inflame the mind, and to silence the voice of pity 3."

MISS BURNEY.

"My family, mistaking ambition for honour, and rank for dignity, have long planned a splendid connexion for me, to which, though my invariable repugnance has stopped any advances, their wishes and their views immovably adhere. I am but too certain they will now listen to no other. I dread, therefore, to make a trial where I despair of success; I know not how to risk a prayer with those who may silence me by a command 4."

REVEREND MR. NARES 5.

"In an enlightened and improving age, much perhaps is not to be apprehended from the inroads of mere caprice: at such a period it will generally be perceived that needless irregularity is the worst of all deformities, and that nothing is so truly elegant in language as the simplicity of unviolated analogy. Rules will, therefore, be observed, so far as they are known and acknowledged: but, at the same time, the desire of improvement having been once excited will not remain inactive; and its efforts, unless assisted by knowledge as much as they are prompted by zeal, will not unfrequently be found pernicious; so that the very persons whose intention it is to perfect the instrument of reason will deprave and disorder it unknowingly. At such a time, then, it becomes peculiarly necessary that the analogy of language should be fully examined and understood; that its rules should be carefully laid down; and that it should be clearly known how much it contains which being already right should be defended from change and violation; how much it has that demands amendment; and how much that, for fear of greater inconveniences, must, perhaps, be left, unaltered, though irregular."

A distinguished authour in "The Mirror 6," a periodical paper published at Edinburgh, has imitated Johnson very closely. Thus, in No. 16:

"The effects of the return of spring have

1 [On the original publication of Mr. Boswell's work the press teemed with parodies, or imitations of his style of reporting Dr. Johnson's conversation; but they are now all deservedly forgotten, except one by Mr. Alexander Chalmers, which is executed with so much liveliness and pleasantry, and is, in fact, so just a criticism on the lighter portions of this work, that the reader will be, the Editor believes, much pleased to find it preserved in the (General) appendix. —ED.]

2 "History of America," vol. i. quarto, p. 332.—BOSWELL.

"Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. i. chap. iv.—BOSWELL.

4 "Cecilia," book vii. chap. i.—BOSWELL.

5 The passage which I quote is taken from that gentleman's "Elements of Orthoepy; containing a distinct View of the whole Analogy of the English Language, so far as relates to *Pronunciation, Accent, and Quantity:*" London, 1784. I beg leave to offer my particular acknowledgments to the authour of a work of uncommon merit and great utility. I know no book which contains, in the same compass, more learning, polite literature, sound sense, accuracy of arrangement, and perspicuity of expression.—BOSWELL.

6 That collection was presented to Dr. Johnson, I believe, by its authours; and I heard him speak very well of it.—BOSWELL.

been frequently remarked, as well in relation to the human mind as to the animal and vegetable world. The reviving power of this season has been traced from the fields to the herds that inhabit them, and from the lower classes of beings up to man. Gladness and joy are described as prevailing through universal nature, animating the low of the cattle, the carol of the birds, and the pipe of the shepherd."

The Reverend Dr. Knox, master of Tunbridge school, appears to have the *imitari aveo* of Johnson's style perpetually in his mind; and to his assiduous, though not servile, study of it, we may partly ascribe the extensive popularity of his writings[1].

In his "Essays, Moral and Literary," No. 3, we find the following passage:

"The polish of external grace may indeed be deferred till the approach of manhood. When solidity is obtained by pursuing the modes prescribed by our forefathers, then may the file be used. The firm substance will bear attrition, and the lustre then acquired will be durable."

There is, however, one in No. 11 which is blown up into such tumidity as to be truly ludicrous. The writer means to tell us, that members of Parliament who have run in debt by extravagance will sell their votes to avoid an arrest[2], which he thus expresses:

"They who build houses and collect costly pictures and furniture with the money of an honest artisan or mechanick will be very glad of emancipation from the hands of a bailiff by a sale of their senatorial suffrage."

But I think the most perfect imitation of Johnson is a professed one, entitled "A Criticism on Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard[3]," said to be written by Mr. Young, professor of Greek, at Glasgow, and of which let him have the credit, unless a better title can be shown. It has not only the particularities of Johnson's style, but that very species of literary discussion and illustration for which he was eminent. Having already quoted so much from others, I shall refer the curious to this performance, with an assurance of much entertainment.

Yet whatever merit there may be in any imitations of Johnson's style, every good judge must see that they are obviously different from the original; for all of them are either deficient in its force, or overloaded with its peculiarities; and the powerful sentiment to which it is suited is not to be found.

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1 It were to be wished that he had imitated that great man in every respect, and had not followed the example of Dr. Adam Smith, in ungraciously attacking his venerable *Alma Mater*, Oxford. It must, however, be observed, that he is much less to blame than Smith: he only objects to certain particulars; Smith to the whole institution; though indebted for much of his learning to an exhibition which he enjoyed for many years at Baliol College. Neither of them, however, will do any hurt to the noblest university in the world. While I animadvert on what appears to me exceptionable in some of the works of Dr. Knox, I cannot refuse due praise to others of his productions; particularly his sermons, and to the spirit with which he maintains, against presumptuous hereticks, the consolatory doctrines peculiar to the Christian Revelation. This he has done in a manner equally strenuous and conciliating. Neither ought I to omit mentioning a remarkable instance of his candour. Notwithstanding the wide difference of our opinions upon the important subject of university education, in a letter to me concerning this work, he thus expresses himself: "I thank you for the very great entertainment your Life of Johnson gives me. It is a most valuable work. Yours is a new species of biography. Happy for Johnson that he had so able a recorder of his wit and wisdom."—Boswell.

2 Dr. Knox, in his "Moral and Literary" abstraction, may be excused for not knowing the political regulations of his country. No senator can be in the hands of a bailiff.—Boswell.

3 [It seems to the Editor to be one of the most insipid and unmeaning volumes ever published. He cannot make out whether it was meant for jest or earnest; but it fails either way, for it has neither pleasantry nor sense. Johnson saw this work, and thus writes of it: "Of the imitation of my style, in a criticism on Gray's Churchyard, I forgot to make mention. The authour is, I believe, utterly unknown, for Mr. Steevens cannot hunt him out. I know little of it, for though it was sent me, I never cut the leaves open. I had a letter with it, representing it to me as my own work; in such an account to the public there may be humour, but to myself it was neither serious nor comical; I suspect the writer to be wrong-headed. As to the noise which it makes I never heard it, and am inclined to believe that few attacks either of ridicule or invective make much noise but by the help of those that they provoke."—*Letter to Thrale*, 5 July, 1783.—Ed.]

END OF THE LIFE

APPENDIX.

No. I.

[NOTE on Cibber's Lives of the Poets,—*referred to in page* 60.]

In the Monthly Review for May, 1792, there is such a correction of the above passage, as I should think myself very culpable not to subjoin. "This account is very inaccurate. The following statement of facts we know to be true, in every material circumstance: Shiels was the principal collector and digester of the materials for the work; but as he was very raw in authourship, an indifferent writer in prose, and his language full of Scotticisms, [Theoph.] Cibber, who was a clever, lively fellow, and then soliciting employment among the booksellers, was engaged to correct the style and diction of the whole work, then intended to make only four volumes, with power to alter, expunge, or add, as he liked. He was also to supply *notes* occasionally, especially concerning those dramatick poets with whom he had been chiefly conversant. He also engaged to write several of the Lives; which (as we are told) he accordingly performed. He was farther useful in striking out the jacobitical and tory sentiments, which Shiels had industriously interspersed wherever he could bring them in; and as the success of the work appeared, after all, very doubtful, he was content with twenty-one pounds for his labour, besides a few sets of the books to disperse among his friends. Shiels had nearly seventy pounds, beside the advantage of many of the best Lives in the work being communicated by friends to the undertaking; and for which Mr. Shiels had the same consideration as for the rest, being paid by the sheet for the whole. He was, however, so angry with his whiggish supervisor (THE. like his father, being a violent stickler for the political principles which prevailed in the reign of George the Second) for so unmercifully mutilating his copy, and scouting his politicks, that he wrote Cibber a challenge; but was prevented from sending it by the publisher, who fairly laughed him out of his fury. The proprietors, too, were discontented in the end, on account of Mr. Cibber's unexpected industry; for his corrections and alterations in the proof-sheets were so numerous and considerable, that the printer made for them a grievous addition to his bill; and, in fine, all parties were dissatisfied. On the whole, the work was productive of no profit to the undertakers, who had agreed, in case of success, to make Cibber a present of some addition to the twenty guineas which he had received, and for which his receipt is now in the booksellers' hands. We are farther assured, that he actually obtained an additional sum; when he, soon after (*in the year* 1758), unfortunately embarked for Dublin, on an engagement for one of the theatres there; but the ship was cast away, and every person on board perished. There were about sixty passengers, among whom was the Earl of Drogheda," with many other persons of consequence and property.

"As to the alleged design of making the compilement pass for the work of old Mr. Cibber, the charges seem to have been founded on a somewhat uncharitable construction. We are assured that the thought was not harboured by some of the proprietors, who are still living; and we hope that it did not occur to the first designer of the work, who was also the printer of it, and who bore a respectable character.

"We have been induced to enter circumstantially into the foregoing detail of facts relating to the Lives of the Poets, compiled by Messrs. Cibber and Shiels, from a sincere regard to that sacred principle of truth, to which Dr. Johnson so rigidly adhered, according to the best of his knowledge; and which, we believe, *no consideration* would have prevailed on him to violate. In regard to the matter, which we now dismiss, he had, no doubt, been misled by partial and wrong information: Shiels was the Doctor's amanuensis; he had quarrelled with Cibber; it is natural to suppose that he told his story in his own way; and it is certain that *he* was not 'a very sturdy moralist.'

"This explanation appears to me satisfactory. It is, however, to be observed, that the story told by Johnson does not rest solely upon my record of his conversation; for he himself has published it in his Life of Hammond, where he says, "the manuscript of Shiels is now in my possession." Very probably he had trusted to Shiels's word, and never looked at it so as to compare it with 'The Lives of the Poets,' as published under Mr. Cibber's name. What became of that manuscript I know not. I should have liked much to examine it. I suppose it was thrown into the fire in that impetuous combustion of papers, which Johnson I think rashly executed when *moribundus*."—BOSWELL.

No. II.

[ARGUMENT in favour of Mr. James Thompson, minister of Dumfermline,—*referred to in p.* 71.]

"Of the censure pronounced from the pulpit, our determination must be formed, as in other cases, by a consideration of the act itself, and

the particular circumstances with which it is invested.

"The right of censure and rebuke seems necessarily appendant to the pastoral office. He, to whom the care of a congregation is intrusted, is considered as the shepherd of a flock, as the teacher of a school, as the father of a family. As a shepherd tending not his own sheep but those of his Master, he is answerable for those that stray, and that lose themselves by straying. But no man can be answerable for losses which he has not power to prevent, or for vagrancy which he has not authority to restrain.

"As a teacher giving instruction for wages, and liable to reproach, if those whom he undertakes to inform make no proficiency, he must have the power of enforcing attendance, of awakening negligence, and repressing contradiction.

"As a father, he possesses the paternal authority of admonition, rebuke, and punishment. He cannot, without reducing his office to an empty name, be hindered from the exercise of any practice necessary to stimulate the idle, to reform the vicious, to check the petulant, and correct the stubborn.

"If we inquire into the practice of the primitive church, we shall, I believe, find the ministers of the word exercising the whole authority of this complicated character. We shall find them not only encouraging the good by exhortation, but terrifying the wicked by reproof and denunciation. In the earliest ages of the church, while religion was yet pure from secular advantages, the punishment of sinners was publick censure and open penance; penalties inflicted merely by ecclesiastical authority, at a time while the church had yet no help from the civil power, while the hand of the magistrate lifted only the rod of persecution, and when governours were ready to afford a refuge to all those who fled from clerical authority.

"That the church, therefore, had once a power of publick censure is evident, because that power was frequently exercised. That it borrowed not its power from the civil authority is likewise certain, because civil authority was at that time its enemy.

"The hour came at length, when, after three hundred years of struggle and distress, Truth took possession of imperial power, and the civil laws lent their aid to the ecclesiastical constitutions. The magistrate from that time co-operated with the priest, and clerical sentences were made efficacious by secular force. But the state, when it came to the assistance of the church, had no intention to diminish its authority. Those rebukes and those censures which were lawful before, were lawful still. But they had hitherto operated only upon voluntary submission. The refractory and contemptuous were at first in no danger of temporal severities, except what they might suffer from the reproaches of conscience, or the detestation of their fellow Christians. When religion obtained the support of law, if admonitions and censures had no effect, they were seconded by the magistrates with coercion and punishment.

"It therefore appears from ecclesiastical history, that the right of inflicting shame by public censure has been always considered as inherent in the church; and that this right was not conferred by the civil power; for it was exercised when the civil power operated against it. By the civil power it was never taken away; for the Christian magistrate interposed his office, not to rescue sinners from censure, but to supply more powerful means of reformation; to add pain where shame was insufficient; and when men were proclaimed unworthy of the society of the faithful, to restrain them by imprisonment from spreading abroad the contagion of wickedness.

"It is not improbable that from this acknowledged power of publick censure grew in time the practice of auricular confession. Those who dreaded the blast of publick reprehension were willing to submit themselves to the priest by a private accusation of themselves, and to obtain a reconciliation with the church by a kind of clandestine absolution and invisible penance; conditions with which the priest would, in times of ignorance and corruption, easily comply, as they increased his influence, by adding the knowledge of secret sins to that of notorious offences, and enlarged his authority, by making him the sole arbiter of the terms of reconcilement.

"From this bondage the Reformation set us free. The minister has no longer power to press into the retirements of conscience, to torture us by interrogatories, or put himself in possession of our secrets and our lives. But though we have thus controlled his usurpations, his just and original power remains unimpaired. He may still see, though he may not pry; he may yet hear, though he may not question. And that knowledge which his eyes and ears force upon him it is still his duty to use, for the benefit of his flock. A father who lives near a wicked neighbour may forbid a son to frequent his company. A minister who has in his congregation a man of open and scandalous wickedness may warn his parishioners to shun his conversation. To warn them is not only lawful, but not to warn them would be criminal. He may warn them one by one in friendly converse, or by a parochial visitation. But if he may warn each man singly, what shall forbid him to warn them all together? Of that which is to be made known to all, how is there any difference whether it be communicated to each singly, or to all together? What is known to all must necessarily be publick. Whether it shall be publick at once, or publick by degrees, is the only question. And of a sudden and solemn publication the impression is deeper, and the warning more effectual.

"It may easily be urged, if a minister be thus left at liberty to delate sinners from the pulpit, and to publish at will the crimes of a parishioner, he may often blast the innocent, and distress the timorous. He may be suspicious, and condemn without evidence; he may be rash, and judge without examination; he may be severe, and treat slight offences with too much harshness; he may be malignant and partial, and gratify his private interest or resentment under the shelter of his pastoral character.

"Of all this there is a possibility, and of all this there is danger. But if possibility of evil be to

exclude good, no good ever can be done. If nothing is to be attempted in which there is danger, we must all sink into hopeless inactivity. The evils that may be feared from this practice arise not from any defect in the institution, but from the infirmities of human nature. Power, in whatever hands it is placed, will be sometimes improperly exerted; yet courts of law must judge, though they will sometimes judge amiss. A father must instruct his children, though he himself may often want instruction. A minister must censure sinners, though his censure may be sometimes erroneous by want of judgment, and sometimes unjust by want of honesty.

"If we examine the circumstances of the present case, we shall find the sentence neither erroneous nor unjust; we shall find no breach of private confidence, no intrusion into secret transactions. The fact was notorious and indubitable; so easy to be proved, that no proof was desired. The act was base and treacherous, the perpetration insolent and open, and the example naturally mischievous. The minister, however, being retired and recluse, had not yet heard what was publickly known throughout the parish; and on occasion of a publick election, warned his people, according to his duty, against the crimes which publick elections frequently produce. His warning was felt by one of his parishioners as pointed particularly at himself. But instead of producing, as might be wished, private compunction and immediate reformation, it kindled only rage and resentment. He charged his minister, in a publick paper, with scandal, defamation, and falsehood. The minister, thus reproached, had his own character to vindicate, upon which his pastoral authority must necessarily depend. To be charged with a defamatory lie is an injury which no man patiently endures in common life. To be charged with polluting the pastoral office with scandal and falsehood was a violation of character still more atrocious, as it affected not only his personal but his clerical veracity. His indignation naturally rose in proportion to his honesty, and, with all the fortitude of injured honesty, he dared this calumniator in the church, and at once exonerated himself from censure, and rescued his flock from deception and from danger. The man whom he accuses pretends not to be innocent; or at least only pretends; for he declines a trial. The crime of which he is accused has frequent opportunities and strong temptations. It has already spread far, with much depravation of private morals, and much injury to publick happiness. To warn the people, therefore, against it was not wanton and officious, but necessary and pastoral.

"What then is the fault with which this worthy minister is charged? He has usurped no dominion over conscience. He has exerted no authority in support of doubtful and controverted opinions. He has not dragged into light a bashful and corrigible sinner. His censure was directed against a breach of morality, against an act which no man justifies. The man who appropriated this censure to himself is evidently and notoriously guilty. His consciousness of his own wickedness incited him to attack his faithful reprover with open insolence and printed accusations. Such an attack made defence necessary; and we hope it will be at last decided that the means of defence were just and lawful."

No. III.

[ARGUMENT in favour of a negro claiming his liberty, *referred to in p.* 132.]

"It must be agreed that in most ages many countries have had part of their inhabitants in a state of slavery; yet it may be doubted whether slavery can ever be supposed the natural condition of man. It is impossible not to conceive that men in their original state were equal; and very difficult to imagine how one would be subjected to another but by violent compulsion. An individual may, indeed, forfeit his liberty by a crime; but he cannot by that crime forfeit the liberty of his children. What is true of a criminal seems true likewise of a captive. A man may accept life from a conquering enemy on condition of perpetual servitude; but it is very doubtful whether he can entail that servitude on his descendants; for no man can stipulate without commission for another. The condition which he himself accepts, his son or grandson would have rejected. If we should admit, what perhaps may with more reason be denied, that there are certain relations between man and man which may make slavery necessary and just, yet it can never be proved that he who is now suing for his freedom ever stood in any of those relations. He is certainly subject by no law, but that of violence, to his present master; who pretends no claim to his obedience, but that he bought him from a merchant of slaves, whose right to sell him never was examined. It is said, that according to the constitutions of Jamaica he was legally enslaved; these constitutions are merely positive, and apparently injurious to the rights of mankind, because whoever is exposed to sale is condemned to slavery without appeal, by whatever fraud or violence he might have been originally brought into the merchant's power. In our own time princes have been sold, by wretches to whose care they were intrusted, that they might have an European education; but when once they were brought to a market in the plantations, little would avail either their dignity or their wrongs. The laws of Jamaica afford a negro no redress. His colour is considered as a sufficient testimony against him. It is to be lamented that moral right should ever give way to political convenience. But if temptations of interest are sometimes too strong for human virtue, let us at least retain a virtue where there is no temptation to quit it. In the present case there is apparent right on one side, and no convenience on the other. Inhabitants of this island can neither gain riches nor power by taking away the liberty of any part of the human species. The sum of the argument is this:—No man is by nature the property of another. The defendant is, therefore, by nature free. The rights of nature must be some way forfeited before they can be justly taken away. That the defendant has, by any act, forfeited the rights of nature, we require to be proved; and if

no proof of such forfeiture can be given, we doubt not but the justice of the court will declare him free."

No. IV.

ANECDOTES OF DR. JOHNSON.

FROM MR. CRADOCK'S MEMOIRS.

From the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xcviii. p. 21, &c.)

[*Referred to in p.* 163.]

THE *Editor was induced, by the authority of Mr. Nichols, to admit a few extracts from Mr. Cradock's* Memoirs *into the text,* ante, vol. i. p. 545, and vol. ii. p. 333, *but on reconsideration he has thought it better to reserve the bulk of that gentleman's anecdotes for the Appendix; and, indeed, it may be doubted whether they will be thought deserving of a place even here, for they are certainly very loose and inaccurate; but as they have been republished in the* Gentleman's Magazine (*for January,* 1828) *with some* corrections and additions from the authour's MS., *the Editor thinks it right to notice them, and as they profess to be there enlarged from the MS., he copies this latter version, which differs in some points from the* Memoirs.

"The first opportunity that I had of being introduced to the great luminary was by Dr. Percy, in Bolt-court [1]. He was on the floor, in a smoky chamber, rather an uncouth figure, surrounded with books. He meant to be civil in his way, showed us a Runic bible, and made many remarks upon it; but I felt awed and uncomfortable in his presence. Dr. Percy mentioned to him that some friend of his had been disappointed in a journey he had taken on business, to see some person near town; Johnson hastily replied, 'Sir, mankind miscalculate in almost all the concerns of life; by your account he set out too late, got wet through, lost the opportunity of transacting his business; but then, I suppose, he got the horse the cheaper.'

"Mr. Nichols, in his entertaining 'Literary Anecdotes,' has justly remarked, that Johnson was not always that surly companion he was supposed to be, and gives as an instance rather an impertinent joke of mine about Alexander and his two queens, and Johnson's good-humoured reply, 'that in *his* family it had never been ascertained which was Roxana and which was Statira [2];' but I then had got experience, and pretty well knew when I might safely venture into the lion's mouth.

"The first time I dined in company with him was at T. Davies's, Russell-street, Covent-garden, as mentioned by Mr. Boswell, in the [first] volume of the 'Life of Johnson.' On mentioning my engagement previously to a friend, he said, 'Do you wish to be well with Johnson?' 'To be sure, sir,' I replied, 'or I should not have taken any pains to have been introduced into his company.' 'Why then, sir,' says he, 'let me offer you some advice: you must not leave him soon after dinner to go to the play; during dinner he will be rather silent (it is a very serious business with him); between six and seven he will look about him, and see who remains, and, if he then at all likes the party, he will be very civil and communicative.' He exactly fulfilled what my friend had prophesied. Mrs. Davis did the honours of the table: she was a favourite with Johnson, who sat betwixt her and Dr. Harwood, the writer of the 'Harmony of the Gospels [3];' I sat next, below, to Mr. Boswell opposite. Nobody could bring Johnson forward more civilly or properly than Davies. The subject of conversation turned upon the tragedy of 'Œdipus [4].' This was particularly interesting to me, as I was then employed in endeavouring to make such alterations in Dryden's play as to make it suitable to a revival at Drury-lane theatre. Johnson did not seem to think favourably of it; but I ventured to plead that Sophocles wrote it expressly for the theatre, at the public cost, and that it was one of the most celebrated dramas of all antiquity. Johnson said, 'Œdipus was a poor miserable man, subjected to the greatest distress, without any degree of culpability of his own.' I urged that Aristotle, as well as most of the Greek poets, were partial to this character; that Addison considered that as terror and pity were particularly excited, he was the properest——here Johnson suddenly becoming loud I paused, and rather apologized that it might not become me, perhaps, too strongly to contradict Dr. Johnson. 'Nay, sir,' replied he, hastily, 'if I had not wished to have heard your arguments, I should not have disputed with you at all.' All went on quite pleasantly afterwards. We sat late [5], and something being mentioned about my going to Bath, when taking leave, Johnson very graciously said, 'I should have a pleasure in meeting you there.' Either Boswell or Davies immediately whispered to me, '*You 're landed.*'

"The next time I had the pleasure of meeting him was at the Literary Club [6] dinner at the coffee-house in St. James's-street, to which I was introduced by my partial friend, Dr. Percy. Johnson that day was not in very good humour. We rather waited for dinner. Garrick came late, and apologized that he had been to the house of lords,

1 [Here is a double or triple mistake. Mr. Cradock says in another part of his Memoirs that he was made known to Dr. Johnson by Lord Stowell, when he was a tutor in University College, Oxford. Now, Johnson did not remove to Bolt-court till 1777, and it is certain that Mr Cradock dined with him at Davies's on the 12th April, 1776.—ED.]

2 [Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins.—ED.]

3 [The Editor never before heard, and does not believe that Dr. Harwood wrote a "Harmony of the Gospels."—ED.]

4 [Boswell says it turned on Aristotle's opinion of the Greek tragedy in general; which may, however, have led to the subject of Œdipus, though he does not notice it.—ED.]

5 [This seems to be also an error, for Boswell says they adjourned to the Crown and Anchor, to sup with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. Langton.—ED.]

6 [Here seems to be another double mistake. No stranger is ever invited to *the Club*. It met at the Turk's Head, Gerrard-street, up to 1783, and did not remove to St. James's-street till 1792, eight years after Johnson's death. Goldsmith died in 1774, twenty years before the club migrated in St. James's-street. It is probable that Mr. Cradock mistook an occasional meeting at the St. James's coffee-house (such a one did really produce "*Retaliation*" for a meeting of *the Club*. Mr. Colman, in his Random Records, makes the same mistake, and wonders at finding noticed in "*Retaliation*" persons who did not belong to the club.—ED.]

and Lord Camden insisted on conveying him in his carriage: Johnson said nothing, but he looked a volume. The party was numerous. I sat next Mr. Burke at dinner. There was a beef-steak pie placed just before us; and I remarked to Mr. Burke that something smelt very disagreeable, and looked to see if there was not a dog under the table. Burke, with great good humour, said, 'I believe, sir, I can tell you what is the cause; it is some of *my country butter* in the crust that smells so disagreeably.' Dr. Johnson just at that time, sitting opposite, desired one of us to send him some of the beef-steak pie. We sent but little, which he soon despatched, and then returned his plate for more. Johnson particularly disliked that any notice should be taken of what he ate, but Burke ventured to say he was glad to find that Dr. Johnson was any ways able to relish the beef-steak pie. Johnson, not perceiving what he alluded to, hastily exclaimed, 'Sir, there is a time of life when a man requires, the repairs of the table!' The company rather talked for victory than social intercourse. I think it was in consequence of what passed that evening that Dr. Goldsmith wrote his '*Retaliation*.' Mr. Richard Burke[1] was present, talked most, and seemed to be the most free and easy of any of the company. I had never met him before. Burke seemed desirous of bringing his relative forward. In Mr. Chalmers's account of Goldsmith, different sorts of liquor are offered as appropriate to each guest. To the two Burkes ale from Wicklow, and wine from Ferney to me: my name is in italics, as supposing I am a wine-bibber; but the authour's allusion to the wines of Ferney was meant for me, I rather think, from having taken a plan of a tragedy from Voltaire.

"I owed my obligations to Dr. Percy. He had a pleasure in taking me with him to call upon Johnson, and in giving me invitations to the chaplains' table whenever he was in waiting at St. James's; and I now regret, for the sake of others, the change that has since been made in altering or giving up that very pleasant association. Percy, on account of the original publication of his 'Ancient Ballads,' and his consequent introduction into Northumberland-House, was much indebted both to Johnson and Farmer. He was not always the great Dr. Percy I was still much acquainted with; he was then in good fellowship with both. Mrs. Percy, afterwards nurse to the Duke of Kent, at Buckingham-House, told me that Johnson once stayed near a month with them at their dull parsonage at Easton Mauduit; that Dr. Percy looked out all sorts of books to be ready for his amusement after breakfast, and that Johnson was so attentive and polite to her, that, when Dr. Percy mentioned the literature proposed in the study, he said, 'No, sir, I shall first wait upon Mrs. Percy to feed the ducks.' But those halcyon days were about to change,—not as to Mrs. Percy, for to the last she remained a favourite with him. Percy was much advanced in dignity, and Johnson had given him a lasting offence by parodying the stanzas of the Hermit of Warkworth. [*Ante*, p. 164.]

"Admiral Walsingham, who sometimes resided at Windsor, and sometimes in Portugal-street, frequently boasted that he was the only man to bring together miscellaneous parties, and make them all agreeable; and, indeed, there never before was so strange an assortment as I have occasionally met there. At one of his dinners, were the Duke of Cumberland[2], Dr. Johnson, Mr. Nairn, the optician, and Mr. Leoni, the singer: at another, Dr. Johnson, &c. and a young dashing officer, who determined, he whispered, to attack the old bear that we seemed all to stand in awe of: there was a good dinner, and during that important time Johnson was deaf to all impertinence. However, after the wine had passed rather freely, the young gentleman was resolved to bait him, and venture out a little further: 'Now, Dr. Johnson, do not look so glum, but be a little gay and lively, like others. What would you give, old gentleman, to be as young and sprightly as I am?' 'Why, sir,' said he, 'I think I would almost be content to be as foolish.'

"Johnson (it is well known) professed to recruit his acquaintance with younger persons, and, in his latter days, I, with a few others, was more frequently honoured by his notice. At times he was very gloomy, and would exclaim, 'Stay with me, for it is a comfort to me'—a comfort that any feeling mind would wish to administer to a man so kind, though at times so boisterous, when he seized your hand, and repeated, 'Ay, sir, but to die and go we know not where,' &c.—here his morbid melancholy prevailed, and Garrick never spoke so impressively to the heart. Yet, to see him in the evening (though he took nothing stronger than lemonade), a stranger would have concluded that our morning account was a fabrication. No hour was too late to keep him from the tyranny of his own gloomy thoughts.

"A gentleman venturing to say to Johnson, 'Sir, I wonder sometimes that you condescend so far as to attend a city club.' 'Sir, the great chair of a full and pleasant club is, perhaps, the throne of human felicity.'

"I had not the honour to be at all intimate with Johnson till about the time he began to publish his 'Lives of the Poets,' and how he got through that arduous labour is, in some measure, still a mystery to me: he must have been greatly assisted by booksellers[3]. I had some time before lent him Euripides with Milton's manuscript notes: this, though he did not minutely examine (see Joddrel's Euripides), yet he very handsomely returned it[4], and mentioned it in his 'Life of Milton.'

"In the course of conversation one day I dropped out to him that Lord Harborough[5] (then

1 [Mr. Richard Burke, collector, of Granada, the brother, not the son, of Mr Burke.—Ed.]

2 [It is possible Dr. Johnson may have been acquainted with the Hon. Robert Boyle, who took the name of Walsingham; and *he* may be the *Boyle* mentioned *ante*, vol. i. p. 103 *n.*; but it is hardly possible that Dr. Johnson would have met the Duke of Cumberland at dinner without Mr. Boswell's having mentioned it.—Ed.]

3 [The original MS. is still extant, and it appears that he had very little assistance, and none at all from the booksellers.—Ed.]

4 ["His Euripides is, by Mr. Cradock's kindness, now in my hands: the margin is sometimes noted, but I have found nothing remarkable."—*Life of Milton*.—Ed.]

5 [Rev. Robert Sherrard, who became on the death of his elder brother, in 1770, fourth Earl of Harborough.—Ed.]

the Rev.) was in possession of a very valuable collection of manuscript poems, and that amongst them there were two or three in the hand-writing of King James I.; that they were bound up handsomely in folio, and were entitled 'Sackville's Poems.' These he solicited me to borrow for him, and Lord Harborough very kindly intrusted them to me for his perusal. At that time he had become careless about his books, and frequently very melancholy. Not finding any acknowledgment about them, I wrote to him, and received the annexed note, 'that he knew nothing about them.'

"'20th January, 1783.

"'Mr. Johnson is very glad of any intelligence, and much obliged by Mr. Cradock's favour and attention. The book he has now sent shall be taken care of; but of a former book mentioned in the note, Mr. Johnson has no remembrance, and can hardly think he ever received it, though bad health may possibly have made him negligent.

"'To Mr. Cradock.'

"This gave me no small concern, and I mentioned it to Steevens, who immediately said, 'You ought not to have lent it to him: he knows nothing about it! I saw the book you describe lie under his old inkstand, and could not think what it was: it is there now.' However, I never regained it till after his death, when reading the melancholy account at Marseilles I became alarmed about the book, and instantly wrote to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who found it directly in the place mentioned by Mr. Steevens, and it was safely returned to Lord Harborough, with due excuses and acknowledgments. I was not equally fortunate in regard to some other papers I had procured for the Doctor in regard to Gray and others, and particularly the French translation of the 'Merchant of Venice.' Something had been said before him about a note of Mason's, relative to the mistake of a translator, and the explanation of the word bowling-green, when I entertained him with a more laughable instance of a mistake in regard to the passage of the return of 'my ship Andrew (*mon-Andrew*),' in the 'Merchant of Venice' (act i. sc. 1). 'This,' says the translator, 'is in England a very merry fellow, who plays tricks at a celebrated annual fair held there, and frequently, by his buffooneries, brings home to his employers very extensive gains.' This book, merely owing to his infirmities, likewise, I never received again.

Sometimes trifles diverted him, and relieved his melancholy, but there could be no possible guess how an anecdote would be received. Speaking of Sterne's Sermons—'Sir, the follow mixes the light with the serious[1]; else in some parts, Dr. Johnson, I was surprised to find you had attended to them at all.' 'Sir, I was in a stage-coach; I should not have read them had I been at large[2].' And directly afterwards Harris's Hermes was mentioned. 'I think the book is too abtruse; it is heavy.' 'It is; but a work of that kind must be heavy.' 'A rather dull man of my acquaintance asked me,' said I, 'to lend him some book to entertain him, and I offered him Harris's Hermes, and as I expected, from the title, he took it for a novel; when he returned it, I asked him how he liked it, and what he thought of it?' "Why, to speak the truth," says he, "I was not much diverted; I think all these imitations of Tristram Shandy fall far short of the original!" This had its effect, and almost produced from Johnson a rhinocerous laugh.

"One of Dr. Johnson's rudest speeches was to a pompous gentleman coming out of Lichfield cathedral, who said, 'Dr. Johnson, we have had a most excellent discourse to-day!' 'That may be,' said Johnson; 'but it is impossible that you should know it.'

"Of his kindness to me during the last years of his most valuable life, I could enumerate many instances. One slight circumstance, if any were wanting, would give an excellent proof of the goodness of his heart, and that to a person whom he found in distress: in such a case he was the very last man that would have given even the least momentary uneasiness to any one, had he been aware of it.

"The last time I saw Dr. Johnson was just before I went to France: he said, with a deep sigh, 'I wish I was going with you.' He had just then been disappointed of going to Italy. Of all men I ever knew, Dr. Johnson was the most instructive."

No. V.

TWO DIALOGUES.

In imitation of Dr. Johnson's style of conversation, by Sir Joshua Reynolds[3].

[*Referred to in p.* 176.]

[*The following jeu d'esprit was written by* Sir Joshua Reynolds, *to illustrate a remark which he had made,* "*That Dr.*

1 [This is made nonsense by the omission of some words. It is correctly given (*ante*, p. 308) from the *Memoirs*; but the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* has *here* made Mr. Cradock a party in a conversation, which in the Memoirs he himself professes to have had at second-hand only.—Ed.]

2 [Here again there is a variation from, if not a falsification of, the *Memoirs*. Mr. Cradock *there* says that it was *Sterne* himself that he amused with this story; nor does he pretend that *he* was the person who lent the book, but relates it as an anecdote told him by a friend. So that *Dr. Johnson* and the *rhinocerous laugh* seem to be mere interpolations. In short, these anecdotes, even after the revision, are very poor authority indeed.—Ed.]

3 [These dialogues were printed in 1816 from the MS of Sir Joshua, by his niece, Lady Thomond; they were not published, but distributed by her ladyship to some friends of Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua. The copy which the Editor has was spontaneously transmitted to him by Mrs. Gwynn, the friend of Goldsmith and of Johnson, whose early beauty is celebrated in the first part of his work (vol. i. p. 186), and who is still distinguished for her amiable character and high mental accomplishments. Lady Thomond, in the prefatory note, calls this a "*jeu d'esprit*," but the Editor was informed by the late Sir George Beaumont, who knew all the parties, and to whom Reynolds himself gave a copy of it, that if the words *jeu d'esprit* were to be understood to imply that it was altogether an *invention* of Sir Joshua's, the term would be erroneous. The substance, and many of the expressions, of the dialogues did really occur; Sir Joshua did little more than collect, as if into *two* conversations, what had been uttered at *many*, and heighten the effect

Johnson considered Garrick as his property, and would never suffer any one to praise or abuse him but himself." In the first of these supposed dialogues, Sir Joshua *himself, by high encomiums upon Garrick, is represented as drawing down upon him Johnson's censure; in the second,* Mr. Gibbon, *by taking the opposite side, calls forth his praise.*]

JOHNSON AGAINST GARRICK.

DR. JOHNSON AND SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"REYNOLDS. Let me alone, I'll bring him out. (*Aside.*) I have been thinking, Dr. Johnson, this morning, on a matter that has puzzled me very much; it is a subject that I dare say has often passed in your thoughts, and though *I* cannot, I dare say *you* have made up your mind upon it.

"JOHNSON. Tilly fally! what is all this preparation, what is all this mighty matter?

"REY. Why, it is a very weighty matter. The subject I have been thinking upon is, predestination and free will, two things I cannot reconcile together for the life of me; in my opinion, Dr. Johnson, free will and foreknowledge cannot be reconciled.

"JOHN. Sir, it is not of very great importance what your opinion is upon such a question.

"REY. But I meant only, Dr. Johnson, to know your opinion.

"JOHN. No, sir, you meant no such thing; you meant only to show these gentlemen that you are not the man they took you to be, but that you think of high matters sometimes, and that you may have the credit of having it said that you held an argument with Sam Johnson on predestination and free will; a subject of that magnitude as to have engaged the attention of the world, to have perplexed the wisdom of man for these two thousand years; a subject on which the fallen angels, who *had not yet lost all their original brightness,* find themselves *in wandering mazes lost.* That such a subject could be discussed in the levity of convivial conversation, is a degree of absurdity beyond what is easily conceivable.

"REY. It is so, as you say, to be sure; I talked once to our friend Garrick upon this subject, but I remember we could make nothing of it.

"JOHN. O noble pair!

"REY. Garrick was a clever fellow, Dr. J.; Garrick, take him altogether, was certainly a very great man.

"JOHN. Garrick, sir, may be a great man in your opinion, as far as I know, but he was not so in mine; little things are great to little men.

"REY. I have heard you say, Dr. Johnson——

"JOHN. Sir, you never heard me say that David Garrick was a great man; you may have heard me say that Garrick was a good repeater—of other men's words—words put into his mouth by other men; this makes but a faint approach towards being a great man.

"REY. But take Garrick upon the whole, now, in regard to conversation——

"JOHN. Well, sir, in regard to conversation, I never discovered in the conversation of David Garrick any intellectual energy, any wide grasp of thought, any extensive comprehension of mind, or that he possessed any of those powers to which *great* could, with any degree of propriety, be applied——

"REY. But still——

"JOHN. Hold, sir, I have not done—there are, to be sure, in the laxity of colloquial speech, various kinds of greatness; a man may be a great tobacconist, a man may be a great painter, he may be likewise a great mimick; now you may be the one, and Garrick the other, and yet neither of you be great men.

"REY. But, Dr. Johnson——

"JOHN. Hold, sir, I have often lamented how dangerous it is to investigate and to discriminate character, to men who have no discriminative powers.

"REY. But Garrick, as a companion, I heard you say—no longer ago than last Wednesday, at Mr. Thrale's table——

"JOHN. You teaze me, sir. Whatever you may have heard me say, no longer ago than last Wednesday, at Mr. Thrale's table, I tell you I do not say so now; besides, as I said before, you may not have understood me, you misapprehended me, you may not have heard me.

"REY. I am very sure I heard you.

"JOHN. Besides, besides, sir, besides,—do you not know,—are you so ignorant as not to know, that it is the highest degree of rudeness to quote a man against himself?

"REY. But if you differ from yourself, and give one opinion to-day——

"JOHN. Have done, sir; the company you see are tired, as well as myself."

T' OTHER SIDE.

DR. JOHNSON AND MR. GIBBON.

"JOHNSON. No, sir; Garrick's fame was prodigious, not only in England, but over all Europe; even in Russia I have been told he was a proverb; when any one had repeated well he was called a second Garrick.

"GIBBON. I think he had full as much reputation as he deserved.

"JOHN. I do not pretend to know, sir, what your meaning may be, by saying he had as much reputation as he deserved; he deserved much, and he had much.

"GIB. Why surely, Dr. Johnson, his merit was in small things only; he had none of those qualities that make a real great man.

"JOHN. Sir, I as little understand what your meaning may be when you speak of the qualities that make a great man; it is a vague term. Garrick was no common man; a man above the common size of men may surely, without any great impropriety, be called a great man. In my opinion he has very reasonably fulfilled the prophecy which he once reminded me of having

by the juxta-position of such discordant opinions. We cannot, however, but observe how very faint, one might almost say feeble, is Sir Joshua's dialogues when compared with the characteristic fire and dramatic spirit of Mr. Boswell.—ED.]

made to his mother, when she asked me how little David went on at school, that I should say to her, that he would come to be hanged, or come to be a great man. No, sir, it is undoubtedly true that the same qualities, united with virtue or with vice, make a hero or a rogue, a great general or a highwayman. Now Garrick, we are sure, was never hanged, and in regard to his being a great man, you must take the whole man together. It must be considered in how many things Garrick excelled in which every man desires to excel: setting aside his excellence as an actor, in which he is acknowledged to be unrivalled; as a man, as a poet, as a convivial companion, you will find but few his equals, and none his superior. As a man, he was kind, friendly, benevolent, and generous.

"GIB. Of Garrick's generosity I never heard; I understood his character to be totally the reverse, and that he was reckoned to have loved money.

"JOHN. That he loved money, nobody will dispute; who does not? but if you mean, by loving money, that he was parsimonious to a fault, sir, you have been misinformed. To Foote, and such scoundrels, who circulated those reports, to such profligate spendthrifts prudence is meanness, and economy is avarice. That Garrick, in early youth, was brought up in strict habits of economy I believe, and that they were necessary, I have heard from himself; to suppose that Garrick might inadvertently act from this habit, and be saving in small things, can be no wonder; but let it be remembered, at the same time, that if he was frugal by habit, he was liberal from principle; that when he acted from reflection he did what his fortune enabled him to do, and what was expected from such a fortune. I remember no instance of David's parsimony but once, when he stopped Mrs. Woffington from replenishing the tea-pot; it was already, he said, as red as blood; and this instance is doubtful, and happened many years ago. In the latter part of his life I observed no blamable parsimony in David; his table was elegant and even splendid; his house both in town and country, his equipage, and I think all his habits of life, were such as might be expected from a man who had acquired great riches. In regard to his generosity, which you seem to question, I shall only say, there is no man to whom I would apply with more confidence of success, for the loan of two hundred pounds to assist a common friend, than to David, and this too with very little, if any, probability of its being repaid.

"GIB. You were going to say something of him as a writer—you do n't rate him very high as a poet.

"JOHN. Sir, a man may be a respectable poet without being a Homer, as a man may be a good player without being a Garrick. In the lighter kinds of poetry, in the appendages of the drama, he was, *if not the first, in the very first class.* He had a readiness and facility, a dexterity of mind that appeared extraordinary even to men of experience, and who are not apt to wonder from ignorance. Writing prologues, epilogues, and epigrams, he said he considered as his trade, and he was, what a man should be, always, and at all times ready at his trade. He required two hours for a prologue or epilogue, and five minutes for an epigram. Once at Burke's table the company proposed a subject, and Garrick finished his epigram within the time; the same experiment was repeated in the garden, and with the same success.

"GIB. Garrick had some flippancy of parts, to be sure, and was brisk and lively in company, and by the help of mimickry and story-telling, made himself a pleasant companion; but here the whole world gave the superiority to Foote, and Garrick himself appears to have felt as if his genius was rebuked by the superior powers of Foote. It has been often observed, that Garrick never dared to enter into competition with him, but was content to act an under part to bring Foote out.

"JOHN. That this conduct of Garrick's might be interpreted by the gross minds of Foote and his friends, as if he was afraid to encounter him, I can easily imagine. Of the natural superiority of Garrick over Foote, this conduct is an instance; he disdained entering into competition with such a fellow, and made him the buffoon of the company; or, as you say, brought him out. And what was at last brought out but coarse jests and vulgar merriment, indecency and impiety, a relation of events which, upon the face of them, could never have happened, characters grossly conceived and as coarsely represented? Foote was even no mimick; he went out of himself, it is true, but without going into another man; he was excelled by Garrick even in this, which is considered as Foote's greatest excellence. Garrick, besides his exact imitation of the voice and gesture of his original, to a degree of refinement of which Foote had no conception, exhibited the mind and mode of thinking of the person imitated. Besides, Garrick confined his powers within the limits of decency; he had a character to preserve. Foote had none. By Foote's buffoonery and broad-faced merriment, private friendship, public decency, and every thing estimable amongst men, were trod under foot. We all know the difference of their reception in the world. No man, however high in rank or literature, but was proud to know Garrick, and was glad to have him at his table; no man ever considered or treated Garrick as a player; he may be said to have stepped out of his own rank into a higher, and by raising himself, he raised the rank of his profession. At a convivial table his exhilarating powers were unrivalled; he was lively, entertaining, quick in discerning the ridicule of life, and as ready in representing it; and on graver subjects there were few topics in which he could not bear his part. It is injurious to the character of Garrick to be named in the same breath with Foote. That Foote was admitted sometimes into good company (to do the man what credit I can) I will allow, but then it was merely to play tricks; Foote's merriment was that of a buffoon, and Garrick's that of a gentleman.

"GIB. I have been told, on the contrary, that Garrick in company had not the easy manners of a gentleman.

"JOHN. Sir, I do n't know what you may have been told, or what your ideas may be, of the manners of gentlemen: Garrick had no vul-

garity in his manners; it is true Garrick had not the airiness of a fop, nor did he assume an affected indifference to what was passing; he did not lounge from the table to the window, and from thence to the fire, or whilst you were addressing your discourse to him, turn from you and talk to his next neighbour, or give any indication that he was tired of your company; if such manners form your ideas of a fine gentleman, Garrick certainly had them not.

"GIB. I mean that Garrick was more overwed by the presence of the great, and more obsequious to rank, than Foote, who considered himself as their equal, and treated them with the same familiarity as they treated each other.

"JOHN. He did so, and what did the fellow get by it? The grossness of his mind prevented him from seeing that this familiarity was merely suffered as they would play with a dog; he got no ground by affecting to call peers by their surnames; the foolish fellow fancied that lowering them was raising himself to their level; this affectation of familiarity with the great, this childish ambition of momentary exaltation obtained by the neglect of those ceremonies which custom has established as the barriers between one order of society and another, only showed his folly and meanness; he did not see that by encroaching on others' dignity, he puts himself in their power either to be repelled with helpless indignity, or endured by clemency and condescension. Garrick, by paying due respect to rank, respected himself; what he gave was returned, and what was returned he kept forever; his advancement was on firm ground, he was recognized in public as well as respected in private, and as no man was ever more courted and better received by the public, so no man was ever less spoiled by its flattery: Garrick continued advancing to the last, till he had acquired every advantage that high birth or title could bestow, except the precedence of going into a room; but when he was there, he was treated with as much attention as the first man at the table. It is to the credit of Garrick, that he never laid any claim to this distinction; it was as voluntarily allowed as if it had been his birthright. In this, I confess, I looked on David with some degree of envy, not so much for the respect he received, as for the manner of its being acquired; what fell into his lap unsought, I have been forced to claim. I began the world by fighting my way. There was something about me that invited insult, or at least a disposition to neglect, and I was equally disposed to repel insult and to claim attention, and I fear continue too much in this disposition now it is no longer necessary; I receive at present as much favour as I have a right to expect. I am not one of the complainers of the neglect of merit.

"GIB. *Your* pretensions, Dr. Johnson, nobody will dispute; I cannot place Garrick on the same footing: your reputation will continue increasing after your death, when Garrick will be totally forgot; you will be for ever considered as a classic——

"JOHN. Enough, sir, enough; the company would be better pleased to see us quarrel than bandying compliments.

"GIB. But you must allow, Dr. Johnson, that Garrick was too much a slave to fame, or rather to the mean ambition of living with the great, terribly afraid of making himself cheap even with them; by which he debarred himself of much pleasant society. Employing so much attention, and so much management upon such little things, implies, I think, a little mind. It was observed by his friend Colman, that he never went into company but with a plot how to get out of it; he was every minute called out, and went off or returned as there was or was not a probability of his shining.

"JOHN. In regard to his mean ambition, as you call it, of living with the great, what was the boast of Pope, and is every man's wish, can be no reproach to Garrick; he who says he despises it knows he lies. That Garrick husbanded his fame, the fame which he had justly acquired both at the theatre and at the table, is not denied; but where is the blame either in the one or the other, of leaving as little as he could to chance? Besides, sir, consider what you have said; you first deny Garrick's pretensions to fame, and then accuse him of too great an attention to preserve what he never possessed.

"GIB. I don't understand——

"JOHN. Sir, I can't help that.

"GIB. Well, but, Dr. Johnson, you will not vindicate him in his over and above attention to his fame, his inordinate desire to exhibit himself to new men, like a coquette, ever seeking after new conquests, to the total neglect of old friends and admirers;—

'He threw off his friends like a huntsman his pack,'

always looking out for new game.

"JOHN. When you quoted the line from Goldsmith, you ought, in fairness, to have given what followed:—

'He knew when he pleased he could whistle them back:

which implies at least that he possessed a power over other men's minds approaching to fascination; but consider, sir, what is to be done; here is a man whom every other man desired to know. Garrick could not receive and cultivate all, according to each man's conception of his own value: we are all apt enough to consider ourselves as possessing a right to be excepted from the common crowd; besides, sir, I do not see why that should be imputed to him as a crime, which we all so irresistibly feel and practise; we all make a greater exertion in the presence of new men than old acquaintance; it is undoubtedly true that Garrick divided his attention among so many, that but little was left to the share of any individual; like the extension and dissipation of water into dew, there was not quantity united sufficiently to quench any man's thirst; but this is the inevitable state of things: Garrick, no more than another man, could unite what, in their natures, are incompatible.

"GIB. But Garrick not only was excluded by this means from real friendship, but accused of treating those whom he called friends with insincerity and double dealing.

"JOHN. Sir, it is not true; his character in that respect is misunderstood: Garrick was, to be sure, very ready in promising, but he intended at

that time to fulfil his promise; he intended no deceit: his politeness or his good nature, call it which you will, made him unwilling to deny; he wanted the courage to say *No* even to unreasonable demands. This was the great error of his life: by raising expectations which he did not, perhaps could not gratify, he made many enemies; at the same time it must be remembered, that this error proceeded from the same cause which produced many of his virtues. Friendships from warmth of temper too suddenly taken up, and too violent to continue, ended as they were like to do, in disappointment; enmity succeeded disappointment; his friends became his enemies; and those having been fostered in his bosom, well knew his sensibility to reproach, and they took care that he should be amply supplied with such bitter potions as they were capable of administering; their impotent efforts he ought to have despised, but he felt them; nor did he affect insensibility.

"GIB. And that sensibility probably shortened his life.

"JOHN. No, sir, he died of a disorder of which you or any other man may die, without being killed by too much sensibility.

"GIB. But you will allow, however, that this sensibility, those fine feelings, made him the great actor he was.

"JOHN. This is all cant, fit only for kitchen wenches and chamber-maids: Garrick's trade was to represent passion, not to feel it. Ask Reynolds whether he felt the distress of Count Hugolino when he drew it.

"GIB. But surely he feels the passion at the moment he is representing it.

"JOHN. About as much as Punch feels. That Garrick himself gave into this foppery of feelings I can easily believe; but he knew at the same time that he lied. He might think it right, as far as I know, to have what fools imagined he ought to have; but it is amazing that any one should be so ignorant as to think that an actor will risk his reputation by depending on the feelings that shall be excited in the presence of two hundred people, on the repetition of certain words which he has repeated two hundred times before in what actors call their study. No, sir, Garrick left nothing to chance; every gesture, every expression of countenance, and variation of voice, was settled in his closet before he set his foot upon the stage[1]."

1 [This is conformable with the opinion of Grimm and Diderot, and with the admission of Mr. Kemble; but it must not be understood too literally. A great actor prepares in his study, positions, attitudes, the particular mode of uttering certain passages, and even the tone which is to be adopted; and having once ascertained, both by thought and experience, what is best, he will naturally adhere to that, however often he may play the part; but it is equally certain, that there is a large portion of the merit of a great theatrical exhibition which is not reducible to any rule, and which depends, not only on the general powers of the performer, but on his health, his spirits, and other personal circumstances of the moment which may tend to encourage or restrain his powers. And it may be safely affirmed, that although no actor ever fancies himself Othello, or any actress Calista, yet that the unpremeditated emotions last alluded to constitute a great part of the charm which distinguishes on the stage *excellence* from *mediocrity*.—ED.]

No. VI.

[ARGUMENT against a prosecution by the Procurators of Edinburgh against the publisher of a libel, *referred to in p.* 306.]

"All injury is either of the person, the fortune, or the fame. Now it is a certain thing, it is proverbially known, that *a jest breaks no bones*. They never have gained half-a-crown less in the whole profession since this mischievous paragraph has appeared; and, as to their reputation, what is their reputation but an instrument of getting money? If, therefore, they have lost no money, the question upon reputation may be answered by a very old position,—*De minimis non curat prætor*.

"Whether there was, or was not, an *animus injuriandi* is not worth inquiring, if no *injuria* can be proved. But the truth is, there was no *animus injuriandi*. It was only an *animus irritandi*[2], which, happening to be exercised upon a *genus irritabile*, produced unexpected violence of resentment. Their irritability arose only from an opinion of their own importance, and their delight in their new exaltation. What might have been borne by a *procurator*, could not be borne by a *solicitor*. Your lordships well know that *honores mutant mores*. Titles and dignities play strongly on the fancy. As a madman is apt to think himself grown suddenly great, so he that grows suddenly great is apt to borrow a little from the madman. To co-operate with their resentment would be to promote their frenzy; nor is it possible to guess to what they might proceed, if to the new title of solicitor should be added the elation of victory and triumph.

"We consider your lordships as the protectors of our rights, and the guardians of our virtues; but believe it not included in your high office, that you should flatter our vices, or solace our vanity; and, as vanity only dictates this prosecution, it is humbly hoped your lordships will dismiss it.

"If every attempt, however light or ludicrous, to lessen another's reputation, is to be punished by a judicial sentence, what punishment can be sufficiently severe for him who attempts to diminish the reputation of the supreme court of justice, by declaiming upon a cause already determined, without any change in the state of the question? Does it not imply hopes that the judges will change their opinion? Is not uncertainty and inconstancy in the highest degree disreputable to court? Does it not suppose, that the former judgment was temerarious or negligent? Does it not lessen the confidence of the publick? Will it not be said that *jus est aut incognitum aut vagum?* and will not the consequence be drawn, *misera est servitus?* Will not the rules of action be obscure? Will not he who knows himself wronged to-day, hope that the courts of justice will think him right to-morrow? Surely, my lords, these are attempts of dangerous tendency, which the solicitors, as men versed in the law,

2 Mr. Robertson altered this word to *jocandi*, he having found in Blackstone that to *irritate* is actionable.—BOSWELL.

should have foreseen and avoided. It was natural for an ignorant printer to appeal from the lord ordinary; but from lawyers, the descendants of lawyers, who have practised for three hundred years, and have now raised themselves to a higher denomination, it might be expected that they should know the reverence due to a judicial determination; and, having been once dismissed, should sit down in silence."

No. VII.

Correspondence[1] between Miss Boothby[2] and Dr. Johnson.

[*Referred to in* vol. i. p. 29, and pp. 109 and 276 of this vol.]

Preface.

[*Of Mr. Richard Wright, surgeon in Lichfield, the original editor of the little volume containing Dr. Johnson's notes of his early life, and the correspondence with Miss Boothby.*]

It will be expected, that the editor of the following curious and interesting pages should give an account of the manner in which the original MSS. came into his possession.

Mr. Boswell, in his admirable Life of Dr. Johnson, thus observes:

"The consideration of the numerous papers of which he was possessed seems to have struck Johnson's mind with a sudden anxiety; and, as they were in great confusion, it is much to be lamented that he had not intrusted some faithful and discreet person with the care and selection of them, instead of which he, in a precipitate manner, burnt masses of them, as I should apprehend, with little regard to discrimination. . . . Two very valuable articles, I am sure, we have lost, which were two quarto volumes, containing a full, fair, and most particular account of his own life, from his earliest recollection[3]."

It does not appear that the MS., from which the following short account of Dr. Johnson's Early Life is copied, was one[4] of the two volumes to which Boswell alludes; although it is evident, from his enumeration of particular dates in the blank pages of the book, that he intended to have finished these Annals, according to this plan, with the same minuteness of description, in every circumstance and event.

This volume was among that mass of papers which were ordered to be committed to the flames a few days before his death, thirty-two pages of which were torn out by himself and destroyed; the contents of those which remain are here given with fidelity and exactness. Francis Barber, his black servant, unwilling that all the MSS. of his illustrious master should be utterly lost, preserved these relics from the flames. By purchase from Barber's widow they came into the possession of the Editor[5].

Dr. Johnson's acquaintance with Miss Hill Boothby, aunt of Sir Brooke Boothby, commenced at Ashbourne, between the years 1737 and 1740, when he was upon a visit at Ashbourne to his friend Dr. Taylor[6]. As an evidence of the value

1 [The Editor had originally intended to have given only a *selection* (see p. 109) of Miss Boothby's letters, but as the little volume in which they were published, by R. Phillips, 1805, (see v. i. p. 29), is now become scarce; and as the whole affair is a curious episode in Dr. Johnson's history, the Editor has, on reconsideration, preserved the entire correspondence.—Ed.]

2 [Miss Hill Boothby was the daughter of Mr. Brook Boothby and his second lady, Elizabeth Fitzherbert. Mr. Boothby was the son of Sir William, the second baronet, by Miss Hill Brooke, and the father of Sir Brooke, the fourth baronet. Miss Boothby was above a year older than Dr. Johnson. Though her mother's name was *Fitzherbert*, she was but distantly related to the Tissington family. She was attached to Mrs. Fitzherbert by an enthusiastic and spiritualized friendship, and on her death Miss Boothby devoted herself to the care of her six children. The Rev. Richard Graves, author of the Spiritual Quixote, was for some time domestic chaplain at Tissington, and as my venerable and amiable friend, Lord St. Helens, informs me, described in that novel the several members of that family, and their visiters, with great accuracy. It may be as well to preserve here the key which Lord St. Helens has given me to the characters introduced into the novel:

Sir William Forrester .	Mr. Fitzherbert.
Lady Forrester . .	Mrs. Fitzherbert.
Lord ——	L. P. Meynell, Esq. of Bradley Park, Mrs. F.'s father.
Kitty Forrester . . .	Catherine Fitzherbert, afterwards Mrs. Bateman.
Miss *Sainthill* . . .	Miss Hill Boothby.
Colonel Rappee . . .	Colonel Deane.
Bob Tench	Mr. Nicholas Thornhill.
Young Templar . . .	Mr. C. Pratt, afterwards Lord Camden.

Even the inferior characters were drawn from the life. The jacobite barber was one Daniel Shipley; George, the butler, was John Latham; and Molly, the lady's maid, was Mary Etches, afterwards married to Latham; Wildgoose, the hero, was supposed to be a portrait of Mr. Graves's own brother; and Lord St. Helens adds, that although the author, to heighten the contrast between him and his brother, describes himself as a *sporting parson*, he was really no such thing, but, on the contrary, a worthy and conscientious parish priest. There is an account of him in the "Public Characters" for 1800—See *ante*, vol. i. p. 515, where Mr. Graves is erroneously stated to have been a *tutor* in Mr. Fitzherbert's family. He was the minister of the parish, and acted as domestic chaplain.—Ed.]

3 See p. 436.—Wright.

4 [It certainly was not. Mr. Wright's book was, he tells us, half destroyed on the 1st Dec. 1784, and the two volumes alluded to were safe in Sir J. Hawkins's pocket on the 5th (*ante*, p. 444).—Ed.]

5 [So far relates to the *Early Life*, which is contained in the first thirty-two pages of Mr. Wright's little volume, and which (except a few observations on some school books) is inserted in different parts of the first volume of, this edition: what follows relates to the correspondence with Miss Boothby.—Ed.]

6 [This statement is founded on the assertion of an anonymous lady, quoted by Mr. Boswell (*ante*, v. i. p. 29), of the correctness of which the Editor had already expressed his suspicion; but he now, on farther consideration, disbelieves most, if not all, the particulars of that statement. It appears certain that Dr. Johnson did not leave London between 1737 and 1740. Mrs. Fitzherbert was not married till 1744. The first of Miss Boothby's letters, dated 1753, seems to prove that her acquaintance with Dr. Johnson was then recent—it is certainly her *first letter* to him. Lord St. Helens does not recollect to have heard how Dr. Johnson's acquaintance with his parents began, but thinks it not improbable that Dr. Lawrence, who had married a Derbyshire lady, may have been the original link of acquaintance: and it appears likely, from several passages of these letters, that it was in *his society* that Miss Boothby, on coming to town in 1753, made Johnson's acquaintance. That the acquaintance was *not* made in early life, and in Derbyshire, seems clear, and that Johnson never was at Mr. Fitzherbert's seat is almost certain. If he had had any local knowledge of it, we should not find Miss Boothby telling him that she was "*then* at Tissington, near Ashbourne in Derbyshire;" nor is it probable, if Johnson had got acquainted with Miss Boothby while he was on a visit with Dr. Taylor at Ashbourne, that there should be no allusion to Dr. Taylor, or to Ashbourne, or to any such previous acquaintance in the whole of this correspondence. In deed, it seems clear, from the history of Dr. Johnson's

which he set upon the letters that he received from her, he numbered them, wrote the dates upon them, and had them bound together in one volume. His intimacy and correspondence with Miss H. Boothby were uninterruptedly continued till her death.

To say that these letters do credit to the understanding of that lady is faint praise. Dr. Johnson himself said of her, that "she had the best understanding he ever met with in any human being[1]."

As they betray no family secrets, but contain reflections upon serious and literary subjects, and display with what benevolent ardour Dr. Johnson valued her friendship, they form an interesting and proper appendage to this little tract. The Doctor's letters to Miss Boothby are printed in Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, and in Boswell's Life of him[2].

The original MSS. are deposited in the museum of antiquities and natural curiosities, belonging to the Editor; which is open to the inspection of the public.

Lichfield, 2d March, 1805

LETTER I.

"MISS BOOTHBY TO DR. JOHNSON.

"30th July, 1753.

"SIR,—I assure you I esteemed your request to write to and hear from me, as an honour done me, and received your letter with much pleasure. Most people, and particularly a lady, would tremble at taking up the pen to reply to a letter from Mr. Johnson; but I had the pleasure of experiencing so much candour and goodness in the man, that I have no fear of the eminent genius, extensive learning, accurate judgment, and every other happy talent which distinguish and complete the authour. In a correspondence with you, sir, I am confident I shall be so far from hazarding any thing by a discovery of my literary poverty, that in this view I shall be so much the more a gainer: a desire to be such will be a motive sufficient to engage your generosity to supply me out of your large stock, as far as I am capable of receiving so high an advantage.

"Indeed you greatly overrate my poor capacity to follow the great examples of virtue, which are deeply engraven in my heart. One[3] of the most eminent of these you have seen, and justly admired and loved. It is but a faint ray of that brightness of virtue which shone in her, through every part of her life, which is, as by reflection only, to be seen in me, her unworthy substitute in the care of her dearest remains.

"Let me beg you therefore to give honour to whom honour is due. Treat me as a friend, dear sir; exercise the kindest office of one towards me; tell me my faults, and assist me in rectifying them. Do not give me the least reason to doubt your sincerity by any thing that has the air of compliment. Female vanity has, I believe, no small share in the increase of the difficulties you have found in one part of your labours, I mean that of explaining in your Dictionary the general and popular language. You should therefore treat this vanity as an enemy, and be very far from throwing any temptation in its way.

"I have great obligations to Dr. Lawrence and his family. They have hearts like yours; and therefore I do not wonder they are partial in judging of me, who have a friendly and grateful heart. You are in the right: I should have been most heinously offended, if you had omitted a particular inquiry after my dear charge. They are all six[4] in perfect health, and can make as much noise as any six children in England. They amply reward all my daily labours for them: the eldest has her dear mother's disposition and capacity. I am enabled to march on steadily with my shattered frame; how long I think not of, but cheerfully wait for

'Kind Nature's signal of retreat'

whenever it pleases God.

"I hope, however, to see you the authour of a Great Dictionary before I go, and to have the pleasure of joining with a whole nation in your applause; and when you have put into their hands the means of speaking and writing the English language with as much purity and propriety as it is capable of being spoken and wrote, give me leave to recommend to you your future studies and labours—let them all be devoted to the glory of God, to exemplify the true use of all languages and tongues. The vanity of all human wishes, you have finely and forcibly proved; what is then left for you, but to seek after certain and permanent happiness, divine and eternal goods,

('These goods he grants, who grants the power to gain,')

and with all the great talents bestowed on you, to call others to the same pursuit. How should I rejoice to see your pen wholly employed in the glorious Christian cause; inviting all into the ways of pleasantness; proving and displaying the only paths to peace. Wherever you have chosen this most interesting subject of religion in your Ramblers, I have warmly wished you never to choose any other. You see, sir, I am much inclined to indulge the liberty you have given me of conversing with you in this way. But I will not please myself longer at the hazard of tiring you. One request, however, I must make; some of those parts of your life, which, you say, you pass in idleness,

own life, that he had not been down to Staffordshire, or Derbyshire, from 1737 till after his mother's death in 1759; nor even, the Editor believes, till after the grant of his pension in 1762.—ED.]

1 [Another gross error of Mr. Wright: Johnson said this, not of *Miss Boothby*, but of *Mrs. Fitzherbert*. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 29.—ED.]

2 [Only one of his letters is published by Mr. Boswell, "the merits of the others not being," said he, (*ante*, p. 276, *n.*) "so apparent." The truth probably was, that Boswell thought they were written in a style that might afford some scope to ridicule or misrepresentation against his revered friend.—ED.]

3 [Mrs. Fitzherbert, who had died a few months before. ED.]

4 [These six children were, as Lord St. Helens informs me, Judith, born 1746, whom Miss Boothby calls Miss Fitzherbert, a young person of uncommon promise, but who died in 1758; William, born in 1748, created a baronet in 1783, the father of the present Sir Henry Fitzherbert; John and Thomas, who both died young; Helena, born in 1751, married to H. Galley Knight, Esq; she died in 1823, leaving an only son, well known in the literary world; and, lastly, Lord St. Helens, himself, born a few weeks before his mother's death, who enjoys, the Editor is happy to add, excellent health, and is distinguished by the elegant amenity of his manners and the pleasantry and acuteness of his conversation. It is pleasing and consolatory to find in one old enough to have been for thirty years known to Dr. Johnson, such an example of the *mens sana in corpore sano*.—ED.]

pray, for the future, bestow on one who has a great regard for you, will highly value every testimony of your esteem, and is, sir, your much obliged friend and humble servant,

"H. Boothby.

"My good wishes attend Miss Williams[1]. Mr. Fitzherbert returns you his compliments. We are now at Tissington, near Ashbourne, Derbyshire."

LETTER II.

"Tissington, 4th Dec. 1753.

"Dear sir,—You might be very sure that something extraordinary and unavoidable must keep me so long silent, to a person whom from every motive I esteem and regard, and consequently love to converse with. I will honestly own to you likewise, that I was extremely pleased with your letter, as one of the prettiest things I ever read in my life, and longed to praise you in reply to it, as a proof of my being convinced that, as a friend, I owed you this honest tribute. But, alas! all my purposes of writing were prevented; first, by a series of family engagements and perplexities, which much affected me, and lately, by what, I believe, is in part the consequence of them, sickness. I have a very tender weak body, and it is next to a miracle it has stood up so long as for seven months without one day's confinement to a room; but, on last Friday se'nnight, a violent fit of the colic seized me, and, till yesterday, disabled me from going out of my room. I am now, thank God, recovering, and only low, weak, and languid. My dear children have been and are all well, except some trifling colds and little disorders: and for them nothing is too hard to suffer, too arduous to attempt; my confidence is strong, founded on a rock; and I am assured I shall be supported for them, till it pleases God to raise them up a better helper. O, certainly, I allow a friend may be a comfort, and a great one; and, I assure you, dear sir, your last kind notice of me brought comfort with it, for which I thank you. Please not to mention any thing more of me in Essex-street, or to any, than that various engagements and sickness have made me appear negligent. I am no complainer, but, on the contrary, think every dispensation of Providence a blessing; enjoy the sweet portion, nor quarrel with the medicinal draught, because it is bitter. What I have hinted to you, of perplexity, &c. is in the confidence of friendship.

"May all your labours be blest with success! Excuse my trembling hand, which cannot do more at present than assure you I am, dear sir, your much obliged and sincere friend,

"H. Boothby.

"Some acquaintance of mine at a distance will have it that you sometimes write an *Adventurer*; for this reason, because they like some of those papers better than any, except the *Ramblers*. I have not seen any. Pray tell me if I must; for, if your pen has any share in them, I shall take it ill to be deprived of the benefit. Be so good as to let me hear from you, when you have leisure."

LETTER III.

"Tissington, 29th Dec. 1753.

"Dear sir,—You very obligingly say, 'Few are so busy as not to find time to do what they delight in doing.' That I have been one of those few, my not having, till now, found time to answer your last kind letter may convince you. My indisposition, and confinement on that account, made it necessary for me to double my application for my little flock; and, as my strength increased, I found occasions to exercise its increase also; so that I really have not had a moment to spare. I know you will be better pleased to infer from hence that my health is much mended, than you would be with the finest and most artful arrangement of abstract reasoning that ever was penned. I have been a great moralizer; and, perhaps, if all my speculative chains were linked together, they would fill a folio as large as the largest of those many wrote by the philosophical Duchess of Newcastle, and be just as useful as her labours. But I have wholly given up all attempts of this sort, convinced by experience that they could at most afford only a present relief. The one remedy for all and every kind of sorrow, the deeply experienced royal prophet thus expresses:

"'In the multitude of sorrows which I had in my heart, thy comforts have refreshed my soul.'

'The sovereign balm for every heart-felt wound
Is only in the Heavenly Gilead found,
Whate'er the sage philosophers pretend,
Man's wisdom may awhile man's pain suspend;
But can no more—wisdom divine must cure,
And love inspire, which all things can endure.'

"As I think, I write; and express my thoughts in words that first offer, sans premeditation, as you see. As I have told you before, I write to the friend, not to the Mr. Johnson, who himself writes better than any man. I shall comply with your request, and not inclose this; though at the same time I am conscious I have so little claim to a place among your riches, that a waste paper drawer will be a much properer one for my poor productions: however, if they have this merit, and you regard them as proofs that I much esteem you, they will answer my purpose, which is that of being regarded as, dear sir, your affectionate and sincere friend,

"H. Boothby.

"My jewels are all well.

"One reason for my inclosing my former letters was the not being sure of your right direction, but I hope I have recollected one. You have not answered my question[2] in my last postscript."

LETTER IV.

"Saturday, 16th Feb. 1754.

"Dear sir,—I could almost think you had been long silent[3] on purpose that you might make the prettiest reflections on that silence imaginable; but I know you never need auxiliaries; your own powers are on every occasion abundantly sufficient. I come now only, as it were, to call upon you in a hurry, and to tell you I am going to Bath. So it is determined for me. Lodgings are taken;

1 [Had there been an old friendship, formed in Derbyshire, the information that she was *now at Tissington, near Ashbourne, in Derbyshire*, would have been quite superfluous.—Ed.]

2 [Relative to the *Adventurer*.—Ed.]

3 [It is evident that Johnson's share of the correspondence was considerable, but, except a few towards the close, none of his letters have been preserved.—Ed.]

and on Monday we are to set out, Mr. Fitzherbert, the two eldest dear ones, and myself. This change of place for six or eight weeks I must notify to you, for fear I should be deprived of a letter of yours a day longer than your own affairs make necessary. If nothing unforeseen prevents, *Mrs. Hill Boothby* will be found on the *South Parade, Bath*, by a letter directed there, after the next week, for we shall travel slowly.

"I will add a few more words, though I am very busy, and a very few will fully show my thoughts on *morality*. The Saviour of the world, truth itself says, '*He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.*'

"I wonder not at your hesitating to impart a secret to a woman; but am the more obliged to you for communicating it as a secret, after so hesitating. Such a mark of your deliberate confidence shall be strictly regarded; and I shall seek for letter T [1], that I may read with redoubled pleasure. I want to know when the *Great Dictionary* will prove itself truly so, by appearing. Every thing that relates to Mr. Johnson has the best wishes of a friendly heart; here I include Mrs. Williams, and desire she will accept her share, which I am sure she will with pleasure, on account of my being, dear sir, your sincere friend, and much obliged humble servant,

"H. Boothby.

"P.S. As a friend of yours and Dr. L[awrence]'s, and one who seems worthy to be such, I am solicitous to inquire after the health of Dr. Bathurst [2].

"Excuse hurry and its effects—I mean my health is very weak, and I have much to do."

LETTER V.

"Bath, 11th March, 1754.

"Dear sir,—It is impossible for me not to pay due regard to your kind solicitude for my better health. I shall therefore begin this letter, as you enjoin me, with an account of it, and tell you it really is better. The waters did not agree with me for some days after I began drinking them; but a little medicinal assistant administered by Dr. Hartley has so reconciled us, that for a week past they have been very salutary, given me an appetite, strength to use exercise without fatigue, whole nights of sweet sleep, and, what some people here would even prefer to these, better looks. For all these I am truly thankful to the giver of all good. You are doubtful whether I am not hurt by needless anxiety. Be no longer so; but be sure I am not: "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," is my preservative from all anxious thought for the morrow. I look not forward but to an eternity of peace and joy, and in this view all *vain* solicitude for the things of this life is taken away.

"You find pleasure in writing letters, and to *me*. I will put a stop to your further inquiry into the cause of this, by most truly assuring you, you give me a very great pleasure in reading your letters. I earnestly wish to be indeed your friend; and as far as I am capable of being such, I beg you always to be certain you are conferring an obligation when you confide in me, or command me. Immediately after I received your last letter, I tripped to the bookseller's for the *Gentleman's Magazine* [2]: many masterly strokes in the picture would have made the hand known to me, had not you named it. You will not be displeased when I tell you, one circumstance drew from me a silent tear, viz. '*one of the last acts of reason*,' &c. and this melting was part from natural tenderness, part from sympathy. How then can I condemn your sorrow? Yet I must, even because I have myself formerly been overwhelmed with fruitless grief for the loss of a friend; and therefore by miserable experience can warn all from splitting on this rock. Fly from it. Many are the resources shown to fly to; but believe me, there is but one that can avail—religion.

My situation here allows me but a very small portion of time to myself. Mr. Fitzherbert loves company, and has a good deal. I have some acquaintance, and a few friends here, who by turns engage me. Thus, though I never go into the public scenes here, I can seldom be alone: but I was determined to secure half an hour, to thank you, and to tell you, whenever you favour me with your letters, no engagements shall prevent my assuring you, I receive them in every place with the greatest pleasure, and am, and shall be, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby

"Overlook all defects."

LETTER VI.

"Bath, 1st April, 1754.

"Dear sir,—That you find my health and well-being of consequence enough to be solicitous about, is a consideration so pleasing to me, that it is impossible your inquiries after them should ever be troublesome; and I have so high an opinion of your judgment, that, were I so situated as to consult it properly, and clearly state my questions, no nervous fine lady in Bath can more frequently have recourse to her doctor for advice, than I should have to you for yours in every doubtful point of conduct. The extreme cold has affected me; but, on the whole, I am, thank God, better than when I first came to this place:

1 [See *ante*, v. i. p. 108, Editor's note. There can no longer be any doubt that Johnson was the author of the papers in the *Adventurer* marked T., and it seems probable, from Miss Boothby's emphatic statement, that she will read them with *redoubled* pleasure, that Johnson had told her that their common friend, Dr. Bathurst, had some interest in these papers. This supports Mrs. Williams's version, to which Johnson himself assented, though it does not explain how Johnson, distressed as he was, could afford to transfer to Dr. Bathurst the profits of his labours.—Ed.]

2 [This and the preceding paragraphs confirm the idea that, at Dr. Lawrence's she had become acquainted with Johnson Miss Williams, and Dr. Bathurst.—Ed.]

3 In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1753, p. 81, is inserted the thirtieth number of the "Adventurer," dated February 17, 1753, which was written by Dr. Johnson. In the same Magazine, the account of the tragedy of the Gamester seems also to have been written by him.—Wright. [Mr. Wright's note is careless and erroneous to an almost incredible degree. The *thirtieth* number of the *Adventurer* was *not* written by Dr. Johnson, whose first paper is the *thirty-fourth*. Nor does Miss Boothby allude to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1753, but to that for 1754; and in which there is *not* (any more than in the former) any paper of the *Adventurer* written by Johnson. The "*picture*" alluded to is Johnson's *Life of Cave*, the first article in the Magazine for February, 1754—and in that the passage referred to is to be found, descriptive of Cave's death: "*One of the last acts of reason which he exerted was, to press the hand which is now writing this little narrative.*"—Ed.]

and so cheerful, that those of my acquaintance who think there is no other use for *spirits* but to *enjoy life in public*, to speak in their own style, wonder I do not frequent the rooms, balls, &c. But the dreaming part of my life is over, and all my pursuits are bent towards the securing—

'A sober certainty of waking bliss.'

I fly from dissipation to serious recollection, a sort of labour which is succeeded by a cheerful rest.

"Sir Charles Grandison I have not read. The reflection of having thrown away much precious time formerly in useless and unprofitable reading makes me extremely cautious; and I am in a bookseller's shop, like a bee in a garden, which you have seen fly round and round, from flower to flower, nor ever rests on any till it finds one which will yield pure honey. So I just touched Sir Charles Grandison in my examining flight; but, from my instinct, found there was no honey for *me*. Yet I am far from saying there may not be *miel très doux* for other kind of bees. However, I find the few to whose judgment I pay the greatest deference agree with you. Mr. Richardson's intention I honour; but to apply your own words *truly*[1] on this occasion—'The best intention may be troublesome.' And perhaps the same way and manner of executing may weary. His mistaking the manners and life of those whom you truly say we *condescend* to call *great* people, is, I think, very pardonable. It would not be worth a naturalist's while to spend the greatest part of his time in observing the various tinctures a camelion takes from every body it approaches; and yet he must do so, to give a true representation of the colours of its life. You can make the application.

"I am entirely of your opinion with regard to education. I will labour all I can to produce plenty. But sanguine hopes will never tempt me to feel the torture of cutting disappointment. I have seen even Paul plant and Apollos water in vain, and am convinced God only can give the increase[2]. Mine is a fruitful soil. Miss Fitzherbert is yet every thing I can wish. Her eldest brother, a fine lively boy; but, *entre nous*, too indulgent a father will make it necessary for him to be sent to school—the sooner the better. Do you know of any school where a boy of six years old would be taken care of, chiefly as to his morals, and taught English, French, &c., till of a fit age for a public school?

"You do not say a word of the Dictionary. Miss Fitzherbert and I are impatient for its publication. I know you will be so indulgent to a friend, as to let me have the pleasure of hearing from you soon. My sincere regard and best wishes will always attend you, as I am, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate friend, "H. Boothby.

"A rainy day has prevented my drinking the waters, or I should have hazarded the head-ache, rather than have been longer silent."

LETTER VII.

"Bath, 20th May, 1754.

"Dear sir,—How was I surprised this morning, when, on opening a letter from you, with the pleasing expectation of its being a reply to one I wrote to you above a week ago, I found you kindly complaining of my silence. The reflections you begin your letter with seemed to me, at first, as if you had mistaken in directing it to me, as I well knew I felt, and had very lately expressed, a regard you could not have the least doubt of. The servant assures me he put my letter into the post-box himself. The post-master assures me, none put there ever fail. Yet somehow this has failed. I shall be sorry if it does not reach you, as there were some parts of it (for it was no short one) wrote with the freedom and confidence of friendship; and the whole sufficient to prove I am never long silent, but from necessity. If this wanderer does at last find you, dear sir, signify its arrival as soon as possible to me. I would not have any thing lost which would be of the least value to you. But if it is lost, my intention and execution of it will still remain as testimonies for me; and if it is possible any one of your friends could give occasion for imputations of inconstancy and unkindness, you may be assured I am, on motives which are invariable, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby.

"We are to leave this place on Tuesday the 28th, and set out for Tissington, where I long to be. I hope to take much better health thither, for the use of my dear little nursery."

LETTER VIII.

"Tissington, 5th June, 1754.

"Dear sir,—The first leisure moment I have, is most justly due to the compliance with your kind request to be informed of our arrival here, and with much pleasure I tell you, that, after a very good journey of four days, we were met with the bloom of health, and the endearing smiles of innocence, last Friday, at Tissington. The sensations of joy and thankfulness I experienced on this interview with the little creatures are not to be described: but, I am persuaded, no heart but hers who bequeathed them to me, ever so truly owned or received them as children.

"The loss of that letter I can no way account for—think no more of it. The subject of part of it was my then situation, and some reflections on the exceeding decline of conversation I observed in general: in which there seemed to be no other propriety than that of trifling French words to trifling somethings, not worthy of being called thoughts. I mentioned *Adventurers*, &c. and expressed, as well as I could, my particular satisfaction in Mr. Johnson's bullion, or rather pure sterling, amidst the tinsel base-mixed stuff I met with, and the high value I set on his letters. I gave you an abstract of Farneworth's History, which I have not time to repeat. I thank you for thinking of a school, and recommending one. Your recommendation would immediately fix me, if I alone was to determine. Two have been particularly recommended to Mr. Fitzherbert, Fulham and Wandsworth; and we have for some time been making all the inquiry we can into

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1 [Johnson, in one of his letters, had evidently expressed some apprehension, that, "with the best intentions, he might be troublesome." Miss Boothby hints that such an apprehension on his part was unfounded.—Ed.]

2 ["I have planted, Apollos watered but God gave the increase." 1 Cor. iii. 6.—Ed.]

both. The last I have many objections to. I shall be much obliged to you for a more particular account of your friend; as—how many boys he takes—his rules and rates—and also if he has a French and dancing master. I am strongly biassed towards a man you speak so well of. That—well instructed in virtue, is the thing I want: and a visit from you now and then, to confirm this instruction, is a high inducement. To some proper place I hope I shall be permitted to take this dear boy this summer, when I also hope for the pleasure of seeing you. I know it will be a pleasure to you to assist me in an affair of such consequence, on many accounts; and I shall not say any more to Mr. Fitzherbert about Fulham till I hear from you; which I assure you, I never do without great satisfaction; as I am, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby.

"Excuse the effects of hurry. I have a cold I brought from Bath; otherwise I am in much better health than I have been for above twelve months past."

LETTER IX.

"Tissington, 1st July, 1754.

"Dear sir,—Truth is my delight: no establishment of custom will, I hope, ever make me deviate from it. And as an excuse seems to me a kind of screen, which has at least the appearance of concealing something we would not have seen, I make none. Nor shall I now say more upon my long silence, than that I have thought and felt it such myself, and from thence leave you to infer that it has been unavoidable. Your last letter was such a one as I expected from you on such a subject—that is, so clear, full, candid, sensible, kind, and friendly, as I hardly ever saw from any other. If I had your talent of expression, I could expatiate on this letter with great pleasure; but as I have not, I must deny myself this indulgence, and treasure up those observations I have made for my own use, which if I could in the best manner express, you do not need for yours. I communicated what you said of Mr. Elphinston [1] to Mr. Fitzherbert, who desires me to say, with his regard to you, that he is much obliged to you, but upon the whole, Mr. Elphinston is not the person he would choose. Though Mr. Fitzherbert is no warm party man, yet I believe, the "*Scotchman*" and "*Nonjuror*" would be insuperable objections. Fulham, I think, will be chosen, at least for a time. The hope of your seeing this dear boy sometimes is a comfortable one; thank you for it. His going from home, and at a distance, I am sure you would see the necessity of, could I lay before you the reasons which daily urge me to feel it. Less evils must be submitted to, with the view of avoiding greater. I cannot help, with much pity, regarding a mere fox-hunter as an animal little superior to those he pursues, and dreading every path that seems to lead towards this miserable chase.

"My health continues tolerable, thank God; yours, and every other good, I sincerely wish you. If present resolutions hold, I may have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with you; however, I hope for that of hearing from you. I beg you never to let me lose one of your reflections upon life. Drop them on the paper just as they arise from your mind: I love them, and profit by them, and I am pleased particularly sometimes to find one of my own, brightened and adorned with your strong and masterly colouring, which gives me back the image of my mind, like the meeting an old acquaintance after absence, but extremely improved. I have no reason, I own, to expect a letter from you soon; but think not that, because I have not before now desired one, I do not deserve one, because I can with truth assure you I have this claim. Nobody can more value your correspondence, or be with greater esteem than I am, dear sir, your friend, and obliged humble servant,

"H. Boothby."

[1] Mr. James Elphinston, who kept a school at Kensington.—Wright. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 85. We gather from this letter that Mr. Elphinston was a *nonjuror*.—Ed.]

LETTER X.

"Tissington, 5th August, 1754

"Dear sir,—I have, as you desired, endeavoured to think about and examine your hypothesis; but this dear little boy, and the change resolved on for him, would not suffer me to speculate in a general way to much purpose. Must you not allow our perception of pain and of pleasure to be in an equal degree? Or does it not often happen, that we are even more sensible to pain than pleasure? If so, those changes which do not increase our present happiness, will not enable us to feel the next vicissitude of gladness with quicker, but only with equal, or with a less degree of perception; and consequently we shall be either no gainers or losers on the whole. And yet, though I am sure I shall experience the truth of this, if I only see you for a few hours, I shall however desire to see you. This is an enigma I leave to your solution, and proceed to tell you, that, if nothing intervenes to change it, our present resolution is, that we are to set out for Fulham on Wednesday se'nnight the 14th of August. On account of the dear little ones I shall leave here, I shall be obliged to make a speedy return; and propose staying only a week at a friend's in Putney, to see every thing fixed, as well as I can, for my young man. But I will contrive to see you and a very few more of my friends in town; and you shall hear from me, as to the when and where, from Putney. You, full of kindness, sitting in your study, will, I know, say—'Why does she hurry herself about so?' I answer, to save you the pain of this thought, that travelling always is very serviceable to me in point of health.

"You will never provoke me to contradict you, unless you contradict me, without reasons and exemplification to support your opinion. 'Tis very true—all these things you have enumerated are equally pitiable with a poor fox-hunter. 'Tis not in man to direct, either his own or the way of others aright; nor do I ever look but to the supreme and all-wise Governor of the universe, either for direction or with hope. I know you kindly mean to avert the pain of disappointment by discouraging expectation, but mine is never sanguine with regard to any thing here. Mine is truly a life of faith, not of sight; and thus I never, as Milton says—

— 'bate one jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up, and steer
Right onward.'

"I like not the conclusion of your last letter; it is an ill compliment to call that *mean*, which the person you speak to most highly esteems and values. Know yourself and me better for the future, and be assured you both are and ought to be much regarded and honoured by, dear sir, your grateful and affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby.

"Your dedication[1] to your great Dictionary I have heard of in these words—A specimen of perfection in the English language."

LETTER XI.

"Putney, 9th August, 1754.

"Dear sir,—As I promised, this is to inform you of our being here, but at present I cannot say more. The pleasure of seeing you, with the ways and means of procuring this pleasure, must be deferred for some days. This evening we take dear Billy to school, and till I have seen how he settles there, I am fixed here. Form some little plan for me, to be executed towards the latter end of this week; for really I am not capable of forming any myself at this time—and communicate it by the penny-post in a billet to me at Mrs. D'Aranda's in Putney. I and my little companions here are well, and all has a favourable aspect with regard to the dear boy's situation. I never forget any thing you say; and now have in my mind a very just and useful observation of yours, viz. 'The effect of education is very precarious. But what can be hoped without it? Though the harvest may be blasted, we must yet cultivate the ground,' &c. I am (somewhat abruptly)—but I am, dear sir, your much obliged and affectionate friend, "H. Boothby."

LETTER XII.

"Sunday evening, Holborn-bridge.

"Dear sir,—Do you think I would have been almost two days in town without seeing you, if I could either have been at liberty to have made you a visit, or have received one from you? No: you cannot think so unjustly of me. The truth is, I have been in a hurry ever since I came here, and am not well. To-morrow I am obliged to go a little way into the country. On Tuesday, Dr. Lawrence has engaged me to spend the evening at his house, where I hope to meet you, and fix with you some hour in which to see you again on Wednesday. Thursday, down towards Derbyshire. Thus is whirled about this little machine; which, however, contains a mind unsubject to rotation. Such you will always find it.

"H. Boothby."

LETTER XIII.

"Putney, 23d August, 1754.

"Dear sir,—Unless a very great change is made in you, you can never have the least reason to apprehend the loss of my esteem. Caprice may have accompanied the morning, and perhaps noon of my life, but my evening has banished that fickle wanderer; and as now I fix not without deliberation and well-weighed choice, I am not subject to change.

"Your very kind visit was a new obligation, which, if I could express my sense of it, must be less. Common favours it is easy to acknowledge, but a delicate sensibility to real proofs of esteem and friendship are not easily to be made known.

"Mr. Millar's method[2] seems to me to be a very right one, and for the reasons you give; and if he will please to carry the catalogue to Mr. Whiston, by the time I shall be in town, I imagine he will have appraised the books; and then we will proceed to the disposal of them, as you shall judge best. Mr. Fitzherbert I have not seen since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and therefore cannot yet say when I can again have that pleasure; but I hope some time next week to repay your visit. I have an aching head to-day, so great an enemy to my inclination, that it will not let me say more than that I am, with much esteem and true regard, dear sir, your affectionate friend, "H. Boothby.

"Mrs. D'Aranda and the young ladies desire compliments. My regards to Miss Williams."

LETTER XIV.

"Tissington, 12th September, 1754

"Dear sir,—I told you I would call upon you before I left London, if I could. I much desired to have seen you again; it was in my mind all Thursday, but so it happened, it was not in my power. Mr. Fitzherbert having changed his mind, and determined not to go to Tunbridge, suddenly took up another resolution, which was to take a house in town, and engaged me to go with him to see one in Cavendish-square, where I was the greatest part of the morning, and met with what took up the rest of the day, besides so much fatigue as would alone have disabled for going out again after I got to Holborn. But, as we are likely to be in town again the next month, and stay there long, I hope I shall have frequent opportunities of seeing you, both where I shall be and at your own house. Thank God we arrived here well on Monday, and found my little dear charge all in perfect health and joy. My brother I shall see next week, and then can fully communicate to him all you was so good as to execute for us in the library affair, and your opinion concerning the disposal of the books. I only saw enough of you in Putney, and in town, to make me wish to see more. It will soon be in your power to gratify this wish. Place is a thing pretty indifferent to me, but London I am least fond of any; however, the conversation of some few in it will soon take off my dislike. I do not mean this as a letter; call it what you will. It is only to tell you why I did not see you again; that I hope a future time will recompense for this loss; that we are safe here; and that every where I am, and shall be, with much esteem, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate friend, "H. Boothby.

"You can write amidst the tattle of women,

1 [She must mean the *Prospectus* addressed to Lord Chesterfield, which had been published so long before as 1747, of which the original manuscript, with some marginal notes by Lord Chesterfield, is in the possession of Mr. Anderdon.—Ed.]

2 [This relates to the sale of some books, which Miss Boothby's brother wanted to dispose of, and about which she employed Johnson to speak to some booksellers.—Ed.]

because your attention is so strong to sense that you are deaf to sound. I wonder whether you could write amidst the prattle of children; no better than I, I really believe, if they were your own children, as I find these prattlers are mine."

LETTER XV.

"Tissington, 28th September, 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—Do you wait to hear again from me? or why is it that I am so long without the pleasure of hearing from you? Had my brother kept his appointment, I should not have failed to give you a second letter sooner; now is the first moment I could tell you his determination concerning the books. But first I am to give you his compliments and thanks for your part in the affair. He thinks, as the sum offered by Mr. Whiston is so small a one, and his son is likely to be a scholar, it will be best to suspend any sale of the books for the present; and if on further consideration he finds he must part with them, then to do it in the method you proposed; as in that way some may be selected for his son's use, and the rest sold, so as to make more than to be parted with to a bookseller. Upon considering both sides of the question, he rather chooses the hazard on one side, with the certainty of greater profits in case of success, than to accept of Mr. Whiston's sum for all the books at present. But I am preparing for a journey to town; and there I hope I shall have an opportunity of explaining upon this subject in a clearer manner; for, though I know what I would say, I cannot say it clearly amidst the confusion of ideas in my head at this time. I beg to hear from you; however little I may deserve, I cannot help much desiring a letter from you. If your taste and judgment cannot allow me any thing as a writer, yet let my merit as a sincere friend demand a return. In this demand I will yield to none; for I am sure none can have a truer esteem and friendship towards you than, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate friend,

"H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVI.

"Tuesday, 29th October, 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—From what Mrs. Lawrence told me I have had daily hopes of the pleasure of seeing you here, which has prevented my desiring that favour. I am much mortified by the disappointment of having been so long in town without one of the greatest satisfactions I promised myself in it—your conversation: and, in short, if you will not come here, I must make you a visit [1]. I should have called upon you before this time if the settling of my dear little charge here had not employed me so much at home; now that business is almost completed. Pray say when and where I may have the pleasure of seeing you. Perhaps you may not imagine how much I am affected by the not receiving any reply to two letters I wrote before we left Derbyshire, and the being a fortnight in town without seeing a person whom I highly esteem, and to whom I am an obliged and affectionate friend, "H. BOOTHBY."

[1] [It must be observed in this, the preceding, and the following letters, how few the interviews between Dr. Johnson and Miss Boothby seem to have been even when they resided in the same place.—ED.]

LETTER XVII.

"Friday-night, 29th November, 1754

"DEAR SIR,—How particularly unlucky I was to be out to-day when you came! For above these fourteen days have I never been a moment from home, but closely attending my poor dear Miss Fitzherbert, who has been very ill, and unwillingly left her to-day to pay a debt of civility long due. I imagined if you came to-day, it would be about the time of my return home. But that we may be the better acquainted with each other's hours, and I secure from another mortifying disappointment, I send to tell you that not being an evening rapper to people's doors, whenever I do go out it is in a morning—a town-morning—between noon and three o'clock; and that for the next four mornings I must be out. Now can't you as conveniently let me have the pleasure of seeing you at five some evening? Name any one, and you shall have your tea as I can make it, and a gratification infinitely superior I know in your estimation to any other, that of seeing your presence gives great pleasure to a friend; for such I most sincerely am to you. "H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XVIII [2].

"DEAR SIR,—I have company, from whom I run just to say I have often rejoiced to see your hand, but never so much as now. Come and see me as soon as you can; and I shall forgive an absence which has indeed given me no small disturbance. I am, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

"H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XIX.

"DEAR SIR,—Perhaps you are the only author in England who could make a play a very acceptable present to me. But you have; and I assure you I shall leave your Irene behind me [3] when I go hence, in my little repository of valuable things. Miss Fitzherbert is much delighted, and desires her best thanks. The author's company would have more enhanced the value of the present; but that we will hope for soon. I am much obliged to you for the good account of the Lawrences, and for many things which increase my regard, and confirm me in being, dear sir, your affectionate friend, "H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XX.

"15th May, 1755.

"MY GOOD FRIEND,—I hoped to have seen you here last night, as the doctor told me he had informed you I was in town again. It is hard to be suspected of coldness and indifference at the very time when one is, and with reason, most strongly sensible of the contrary. From your own kind conduct to me, in particular lately, you who are accustomed to make just inferences and conclusions, might have easily made the true ones, and have discovered there was too much to be expressed [4]. To a less penetrating person this

[2] [This undated note seems to imply that there had been an interruption of their intercourse, occasioned either by some misunderstanding or by illness; if by the latter, the date was probably in the winter of 1755.—ED.]

[3] [Miss Boothby probably left town before Christmas, 1755, and did not return till about May, 1756.—ED.]

[4] [These expressions, it must be owned, seem to partake of the *tender;* but the age and circumstances of the

might occasion a surprise of neglect; but I could not have imagined you would or could have been so deceived. My friendship is a poor acquisition; but you see it is so far valuable that it is firm and constant. Then you will say it is not a poor acquisition. Well, be it what it will, be assured you have as far as it can ever extend either to please or serve you. But do not suspect me. I have an opportunity just now to send this—therefore no more till I see you; except that I am, indeed with much esteem, gratitude, and affection, dear sir, your friend, "H. Boothby.

"I hope I am better, and Miss F. in a good way. She has the measles."

LETTER XXI.

"Tissington, 15th June, 1755.

"Dear sir,—That we arrived safe here, and had every thing to make our journey easy and pleasant, is most of what I have time to say, except that amidst the smiles of the country, a country I love, my native one, and the smiles of my children, whom I love much more, I am sensible you are a hundred and forty miles distant. This is not like forgetting you. At present I am the worse for the fatigue of travelling; which, contrary to custom, was a great one to me: but I hope this pure, sweet air, will have a great influence upon my health when I have recovered my fatigue. Your little friend is I think the better for her four days' exercise. You were the subject of our conversation many times on the road, and will often be so. I hope I shall soon find you think of us. I can never forget the hours you generously bestowed on one who has no claim or merit, but that of being, dear sir, with much esteem, your grateful and affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby.

"Miss Fitzherbert's love to you; no small treasure, I assure you."

LETTER XXII.

"Tissington, 4th July, 1755.

"Two letters from Mr. Johnson! Why did I not reply to the first kind greeting before he answered my letter? I don't love to be outdone in kindness; and I was both angry and pleased when I saw your second letter, my good friend. But the truth is I have been lazy. It had been long since I had known what quiet was; and I found in myself, both inwardly and outwardly, a strong inclination to enjoy it. I read your letters over and over; but till now I could not sit down to write to you. It is true I am abstracted from common life, as you say. What is common life but a repetition of the same things over and over? And is it made up of such things as a thinking, reflecting being can bear the repetition of over and over long without weariness? I have found not; and therefore my view is turned to the things of that life which must be begun here, is ever new and increasing, and will be continued eternally hereafter. Yet, mistake me not, I am so far from excluding social duties from this life that I am sure they are a part of it, and can only be duly and truly exerted in it. Common life I call not social life; but in general that dissipation and wandering which leads from the duties of it. While I was in town I did not feel myself as a part of that multitude around me. The objects I saw at dinners, &c. except yourself, when they had any of my attention, drew it only to pity their want of attention to what chiefly concerned their happiness; and oftener they were as passing straws on the surface of a Dovedale stream [1], and went as lightly and as quick over the surface of my mind. My importance here I wish was greater, if it might please God to grant me another wish, that of making one soul better and happier. I think reputation and dignity have no value, but as far as they may be made means of influencing and leading into virtue and piety. Mankind of all degrees are naturally the same: manners differ from different causes, but not men. A miner in Derbyshire, under the appearance of simplicity and honesty, has perhaps more art than the most accomplished statesman. We are all alike bad, my dear friend, depend upon it, till a change is wrought upon us, not by our own reasoning, but by the same Divine Power who first created and pronounced all he had made very good. From this happy state we all plainly fell, and to it can we only be restored by the second Adam, who wrought out a full and complete redemption and restoration for us. Is this enthusiasm? Indeed it is truth: and I trust you will some time be sure it is so; and then, and not till then, will you be happy, as I ardently wish you. I am much better. My cough is now nothing, and my voice almost clear. I am weak yet, too weak to attempt to see Dovedale. But keep your resolution, and come and see us; and I hope I shall be able to walk there with you. I give you leave to fear the loss of me, but doubt not in the least of my affection and friendship; this I cannot forgive. Miss Fitzherbert says she does not forget her promise. She is studying your *Ramblers* to form her style, and hopes soon to give you a specimen of good writing. She is very well, and flying about the fields every fair day, as the rest are.

"Let me hear from you as soon as you can. I love your letters, and always rejoice to find myself in your thoughts. You are very frequently in mine; and seldom without a petition to Heaven for you. Poor is that love which is bounded by the narrow space of this temporal scene: mine extends to an eternity; and I cannot desire any thing less for you, for whom I have the sincerest regard, than endless happiness; as a proof that I am truly, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby.

"The great Dictionary is placed in full view, on a desk in my own room. I am sorry you have met with some disappointments in the next edition [2]. Best wishes to Miss Williams.

"Do not say you have heard from me at the good doctor's [3]. I should write to him, but have

parties, and the context of other letters, induce the Editor to attribute these and certain similar expressions which he will soon observe in Dr. Johnson's answers, to the enthusiastic style in which Miss Boothby and her friends indulged. See particularly the next letters of the lady, in which it appears that she was endeavouring to proselyte Johnson to her peculiar views of some religious subjects.—Ed.]

1 [Tissington is within a walk of Dovedale, oneside of which belongs to the Fitzherberts.—Ed.]

2 [What these were do not appear. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 130, n.—Ed.]

3 [Dr. Lawrence.—Ed.]

laid out all my present stock of time on you. O! chaises and such things are only transient disquiets. I have, on a fine still day, observed the water as smooth as glass, suddenly curled on the surface by a little gust of air, and presently still and smooth again. No more than this are my chaise troubles. Like Hamlet's Ghost, "*'Tis here—'tis gone.*'"

LETTER XXIII.

"Tissington, 23d July, 1755.

DEAR SIR,—To answer your questions—I can say that I love your letters, because it is very true that I do love them; and I do not know any one reason why I may not declare this truth; so much do I think it would be for my reputation, that I should choose to declare it, not only to you, but to all who know you. Ask yourself why I value your affection; for you cannot be so much a stranger to yourself as not to know many reasons why I ought highly to value it; and I hope you are not so much a stranger to me as not to know I would always do as I ought, though, perhaps, in this case the doing so has not the merit of volition—for in truth I cannot help it. So much in reply to the two first sentences in your last letter. It is no unpleasing circumstance to me that the same messenger who has taken a letter to the post-house at Ashbourn from me to you, has twice brought back one from you to me. Possibly, while I am now replying to your last, you may be giving me a reply to mine again. Both ways I shall be pleased, whether I happen to be beforehand with you, or you again with me.

"I am desirous that in the *great and one thing necessary* you should think as I do; and I am persuaded you some time will. I will not enter into a controversy with you. I am sure I never can this way convince you in any point wherein we may differ; nor can any mortal convince me, by human arguments, that there is not a divine evidence for divine truths[1]. Such the apostle plainly defines faith to be, when he tells us it is 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' Human testimony can go no farther than things seen and visible to the senses. Divine and spiritual things are far above; and what says St. Paul? 'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.' Do read the whole chapter; and, if you please, Mr. Romaine's Sermon, or Discourse, lately published, 'On the benefit which the Holy Spirit of God is of to man in his journey through life.' I utterly disclaim all faith that does not work by love, love that—

'Takes every creature in of every kind;'

and believe from my soul that in every sect and denomination of Christians there are numbers, great numbers, who will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the promise you quote be gloriously fulfilled. I believe and rejoice in this assurance of happiness for ten thousand times ten thousand, thousand, &c. of every language and nation and people. I am convinced that many true Christians differ; and if such do differ, it can be only in words, with regard to which great caution should be used.

"I continue as well in health as I told you I was in my last. Mr. Fitzherbert has put off his coming here till August. My dear Miss is very well. She bids me send you her love, and tell you she must consider some time about writing to you before she can execute properly.

"Do not treat me with so much deference. I have no claim to it; and, from a friend, it looks too like ceremony—a thing I am at this time more particularly embarrassed with. Perhaps you never knew a person less apt to take offence than myself; and if it was otherwise in general, I am sure you would not have cause to apprehend the giving it, but would always be a particular exception to my taking it.

"See how far the pleasure of conversing with you has overcome my present dislike to writing; and let it be a farther proof to you of my being, dear sir, your affectionate friend, and obliged humble servant, "H. BOOTHBY[2].

"How does Miss Williams and her father? My regards to her."

LETTER XXIV.

"Tissington, 29th July, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—As it happened your rebuke for my silence was so timed as to give me pleasure. Your complaints would have been very painful to me had I not been pretty certain that before I read them you would receive a letter which would take away all cause for them. I could not have borne them under the least consciousness of having merited them. But, quite free from this, such marks of your friendship were very pleasing. You need not make use of any arguments to persuade me of the necessity of frequent writing; I am very willing to acknowledge it in a correspondence with you; though I never so little liked to write, in general, since I could write, as for some time past. Both my mind and body are much indisposed to this employment. The last is not so easy in the posture which habit has fixed when I write, and consequently the mind affected too. To you I always wish to appear in the best light; but you will excuse infirmities; and to purchase your letters I shall think my time happily bestowed. If but one line can give you pleasure or suspended pain, I shall rejoice. How kind was your last little letter! I longed to return my immediate thanks: but Mr. Fitzherbert's mother, an old lady, bigoted to forms, prevented me; and has prevented me till now. She came here, is here, and stays some time. I continue much better in my health, thank God! alert and cheerful; and have stood storms and tempests, rain and cold, unhurt. I observe the good doctor's rules, and have found them efficacious. Mr. Fitzherbert had appointed his time for being here as next week, but has changed it to near three weeks hence. Tell me some literary news—I mean of your own; for I am very indifferent to the productions of others

1 [It must not be inferred from this that Dr. Johnson had in his letter maintained a contrary doctrine. He probably combated some of Miss Boothby's peculiar tenets, which she defends, as is common in such controversies, by assertions which her antagonist would not have thought of denying.—ED.]

2 At the end of this letter Dr Johnson wrote, *answered*.—WRIGHT.

but interested warmly in all yours, both in heart and mind.

"I hope our difference is only in words, or that in time our sentiments will be so much the same as to make our expressions clear and plain. As you say, every moment brings the time nearer in which we must think alike. O may this time (or rather end of time to us) which will fully disclose truth, also with it disclose eternal happiness to us! You see I cannot help praying for you, nor shall I ever, as I am truly, dear sir, your affectionate friend, "H. Boothby.

"My little flock all well; Miss much at your service, and has a high regard for you. If you mention me at the doctor's, mention me as one who is always glad of paying regard there, and hearing well of them."

LETTER XXV.

"30th July, 1755.

Dear sir,—Why, my good friend, you are so bountiful and so kind that I must thank you, and say I am truly grateful, though I have not time for more, as I have been obliged to write several letters to-day, and cannot easily write much. Your account of Mr. Williams's departure was very sweet to me[1]. He is happy without doubt, and, instead of condoling with, I most heartily rejoice with Miss Williams from this assurance, which I trust she has as strongly as I, and then she must be every moment thankful.

"I am not so well as I have been. The damp weather has affected me. But my dear children are all well; and some sunshine will revive me again. This is only to let you see I think of you, and, as I ought, receive every instance of your regard when I assure you it increases mine, and makes me more and more, dear sir, your grateful and affectionate friend, "H. Boothby.

"I will tell you some time what I think of Anacreon[2]."

LETTER XXVI.

"13th August, 1755.

Dear sir,—You was at Oxford then? And I was vain enough to conclude you was not in town, or I should have heard from you sooner, and you have not lessened my vanity by thinking of and writing to me, in a place where so many objects suited to your taste would be courting your attention—so many of the learned seeking your conversation. This is a new obligation, of which I am very sensible. Yet I had rather seen a letter dated from Lichfield, because then I should have hoped soon to see Mr. Johnson himself, and for an opportunity of conversing with him.

"I am at present preparing to receive Mr. Fitzherbert, Mr. and Mrs. Alleyne, Mr. Gernier, &c. If you have been in town this week, probably you have seen Mr. Fitzherbert. I hope he would not neglect to inquire after the most valuable acquaintance he has there. Our scene here will be much changed. But all is, and ought to be, variable in this life; and I expect the change with much inward tranquillity. The interval of rest and quiet I have had has greatly contributed to the amendment of my health. I walked a mile yesterday without great fatigue; and hope I shall be able to support the labours to come. I am not careful, however, for the morrow. That is in the hands of the almighty and all-merciful God. There I trust; and pray—'Give me *this* day my daily bread.'

"Miss is still *tuning*—no wonder that you have inspired *her* with awe. She is disturbed she does not write; yet cannot satisfy herself with any mental composition. She has yet been working for you. I leave her to herself, and hope she will produce something.

"Remember that the more people I see the more I shall rejoice in a letter from you. Turtle-feasts and venison-feasts I delight not in. Treat me sometimes, as often as you can, with what will be really a feast; and in the best manner I am able I will thank you, and be ever, as now, dear sir, your grateful and affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby."

LETTER XXVII.

"Tissington, 20th August, 1755.

"Dear sir,—Every where I find myself in your thoughts—at Oxford—in town. How shall I reward this kind attention to a friend, this tender solicitude for her health and welfare? Your partiality will I know make you reply, 'By neglecting no means to procure and preserve them.' This is what I am sensible I owe to the most inconsiderable creature whom it pleases a good Providence to benefit in the last degree by me, and much more to a friend. Pain and sickness do most certainly produce the consequences you observe; and often do I reflect with the greatest wonder and gratitude on all those various occasions in which it has pleased God to visit me with these, that he should never leave me without that medicine of life—a friend.

"I am glad you saw Mr. Fitzherbert, and that he repeated his invitation to Tissington. He and his company arrived here on Thursday last, all at a loss what to do with themselves in *still life*. They set out yesterday to Derby race, and return on Friday, with some forty more people, to eat a turtle; weight, a hundred and thirty. This feast I, who, you know, love eating, am preparing for them. It will be a day of fatigue. But then how sweet and comfortable it will be, to lie down and rest at night! The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eateth little or much. My business is to prepare a feast, not to eat. During the time of our having been here alone, I have found great good from rest and quiet, and the strength gained in this interval of repose enables me to support the hurry of company, and the necessary cares for their reception and entertainment, much better than I could do for a long time

1 [When the term "*sweet*" is applied on such an occasion, it is not surprising that we meet strange expressions scattered through the correspondence.—Ed.]

2 [Had he sent to Miss Boothby the translation of Anacreon's Dove, which he gave to Mrs. Thrale in 1777? When dictating it to that lady he said, "I never was much struck with any thing in the Greek language till I read *that*, so I never read any thing in the same language since, that pleased me as much. I hope my translation," continued he, "is not worse than that of Frank Fawkes." Seeing her disposed to laugh, "Nay, nay," said he, "Frank Fawkes has done them very finely." When she had finished writing, "But you must remember to add," said Dr. Johnson, "that though these verses were planned, and even begun, when I was sixteen years old, I never could find time to make an end of them before I was sixty-eight."—Ed.]

before I left London. But I am not so well as I was a fortnight since. The pain in my side is increased, as I find it will be on all occasions where I am obliged to prolong exercise to the least degree of fatigue, and in my present situation there is no avoiding these sometimes. But I have respite seasonably, thank God, as now. And next week Mr. Fitzherbert and his guests go to dance at Buxton, and see the Peak. You will perhaps think a tour round the Peak would be no bad thing for me; and I should think so too; but as this will be ordered, or disordered, by the uncertainty and irregularity of the directors, it will be a rash attempt for me; and, besides, they have only vehicles sufficient for themselves; so that I shall have another resting time, before they return again to stay a few days; and then they all go to Lichfield race, from whence Mr. Fitzherbert and Gernier only return back. Now, I have not only told you the state of my health, but of affairs here, that you may know both how I do, and what I do.

"And, while I am writing all this, I really feel ashamed; conscious how little I merit to be thought of consequence enough for any body to desire such information concerning me, particularly you, who I am persuaded might select a friend among the most worthy. Do not call this feigned humility, or, in other words, the worst sort of pride. 'Tis truth, I assure you.

"Will you come into Derbyshire? But why do I ask? You say you will. In the mean time, I will endeavour, with God's blessing, to lay in a stock of health, that I may have the pleasure of walking with you in Dovedale, and many other pleasures I hope for.

"You desire longer letters; here you have one —but such a one as I am afraid will not make you repeat that desire. However, it will be a proof of my willingness to gratify your request whenever it is in my power, and that I never say little to Mr. Johnson by choice, but when I can hear him talk.

"The least degree of your quiet is a treasure which I shall take the utmost care of—but yet, from very certain experience, and the truest regard to your peace, I must advise to take it out of all human hands. Young's experience strongly speaks with mine—

'Lean not on earth; 't will pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed, at best; but oft a spear;
On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.'

Yet such has been the amazing mercy of God to me, that now I can say—'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' Looking over some old papers lately I found two lines I had scratched out, which were prophetic of what has since happened to me—

'Variety of pain *will* make me know,
That greatest bliss is drawn from greatest woe.'

But this, perhaps, you say, is far from being a dissuasive. Why, as to the event here, 't is indeed the contrary. But, in general, the disappointment and pain is certain, the event not so. There is no peace but that one which the Prince of Peace, king of Salem, left to his disciples—'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' No; for in another place, our Saviour says, 'In the world ye shall have tribulation'—'Seek, and you will surely find.' You do me the honour to call me your monitress; and you see I endeavour to execute the duty of one. Peace and happiness here and for ever do I most ardently wish you; as I am truly, dear sir, your greatly obliged and affectionate friend, "H. BOOTHBY.

"Miss's love.

"N. B.—I intended to have concluded this, where I talked of a longer letter on the other side, but went on imperceptibly as it were. Remember you are a whole sheet in my debt after you receive this."

LETTER XXVIII.

"8th September, 1755

"DEAR SIR,—It is as impossible for me to forbear writing, as it is to say a tenth part of what I would say. Two letters I have from you demand a vast deal; yet not more than I am willing to give, was I able; but Mr. Fitzherbert has been at home above a week, and company, &c. have prevented my doing any thing but attend to domestic employments. I do not allow you to be a judge with regard to your conferring obligations. I am to judge and estimate in this case. But, now you know my thoughts, if the repetition displeases, I shall avoid it.

"Your letters are indeed very different from the common dialect of daily correspondence, and as different from the style of a school dogmatist. Much sense in few and well-chosen words. Daily correspondence does not commonly afford, nor a school dogmatist, delicate praise. So much for your letters. As to what you say of mine, dear sir, if they please you, I am perfectly satisfied. And, high as I rate your judgment, it gives me more pleasure to think I owe much of your applause to the partiality of a kind friend, than I should receive from unbiassed criticism; were it publickly to pronounce me superior to all the Arindas, Sevignés, &c. in epistolary excellence.

"I have been fourteen miles to-day, was out by eight in the morning (some hours before your day begins), despatched several important things, am tired, but could not suffer another post to go without an assurance that I am, dear sir, your affectionate friend, and obliged one too,

"H. BOOTHBY."

LETTER XXIX.

"Tissington, 20th Sept., 1755

"DEAR SIR,—Were I at liberty, it would not be in my power to enhance the value of my letters by their scarcity. You should have them, till you cried out 'Hold your hand.' But you cannot imagine the half of what I have to do; and I assure you I have on your account put off writing to others from time to time, till now I am ashamed. Be silent at Dr. Lawrence's as to me, for I have been long in debt there: I intended to have paid to-day, but you won't let me. This way I consider—I must go to Derby on Monday, to stay some days—no writing then—and, therefore, I must write to Mr. Johnson now, and defer the rest—why I *must* write to Mr. Johnson, rather than to others, he may find out.'

"You do not pity me, when I am whirled

round by a succession of company; yet you are anxious for my health. Now this is, though perhaps unknown to you, really a contradiction. For one day's crowd, with the preceding necessary preparations to receive them, the honours, as 't is called, of a large table, with the noise, &c. attending, pulls down my feeble frame more than any thing you can imagine. To that, air, gentle exercise, and then quiet and rest, are most friendly. You have often declared you cannot be alone; and I, as often, that I could not *be* long, unless I was some hours in every day alone. I have found myself mistaken; for yet I am in being, though for some time past I have seldom had one half hour in a day to myself; and I have learned this profitable lesson, that resignation is better than indulgence; and time is too precious a thing for me to have at my own disposal. Providence has given it to others, and if it may profit them, I shall rejoice. It is all I desire.

"I can only be sorry that the text in the Corinthians [1] does not prove to you what I would have it, and add to my prayers for you that it may prove it.

"Miss Fitzherbert is very well, and all my dear flock. She sends her love to you.

"You will prolong [2] your visit to this part of the world, till some of us are so tired of it that we shall be moving towards you. Consider, it is almost October. When do you publish? Any news relating to you will be acceptable: if it is good, I shall rejoice; if not, hope to lessen any pain it may give you by the sharing it, as, dear sir, your truly affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby."

LETTER XXX.

"Tissington, 11th October, 1755.

"Dear sir,—I have been so great a rambler lately, that I have not had time to write. A week at Derby; another between Stafford and some other relations. The hurrying about proved too much for my strength, and disordered me a good deal; but now, thank God, I am better again. Your letter I met here, as I always do every one you write, with much pleasure. I expected this pleasure; and as I should have met disappointment if I had not had a letter, so the pleasure of one was increased. Few things can disappoint me: I look for no satisfaction from them; but you may greatly, as you have given me a confidence in your highly valued friendship. Complaints for want of time will be one of those which must be made by all, whose hope is not full of immortality; and to this, the previous review of life, and reflections you have made, are necessary. I am persuaded you had not time to say more, or you could not have concluded your last as you did. A moment's reflection would have prevented a needless wish.

"Have you read Mr. Law? not cursorily, but with attention? I wish you would consider him. 'His appeal to all that doubt, &c.' I think the most clear of all his later writings; and, in recommending it to you, I shall say no more or less than what you will see he says in his advertisement to the reader.

"In less than a month we are to be in Cavendish-square. Mr. Fitzherbert has fixed Friday se'nnight for going to town himself, and we are to follow soon after that time. Need I say, I shall be glad to see you? No—you know I shall; and, unless duty [3] calls to Lichfield, I wish rather to have that visit deferred, till it may give me an opportunity of seeing you here on our return in the summer. Consider of this, and contrive so, if possible, as that both in summer and winter I may have the pleasure of your conversation; which will greatly cheer the gloom of one season, and add to the smiles of the other. Such influence has such a friend on, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate humble servant,

"H. Boothby."

"My dear Miss Fitzherbert is well, very well, and has never given me one alarm since we came here. She sends you her love very sincerely."

DR. JOHNSON TO MISS BOOTHBY.

"Saturday [4], (27th Dec. 1755.)

"Dearest dear,—I am extremely obliged to you for the kindness of your inquiry. After I had written to you, Dr. Lawrence came, and would have given some oil and sugar, but I took rhenish and water, and recovered my voice. I yet cough much, and sleep ill. I have been visited by another doctor to-day; but I laughed at his balsam of Peru. I fasted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and felt neither hunger nor faintness. I have dined yesterday and to-day, and found little refreshment. I am not much amiss; but can no more sleep than if my dearest lady were angry at, madam, your, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

"Sunday night, (*December*, 1755 [5].)

"My dear sir,—I am in trouble about you; and the more, as I am not able to see how you do myself—pray send me word. You have my sincere prayers; and the first moment I can, you shall see, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

"H. Boothby."

"I beg you would be governed by the good doctor while you are sick; when you are well, do as you please."

DR. JOHNSON TO MISS BOOTHBY.

"30th December, 1755.

"Dear madam,—It is again midnight, and I am again alone. With what meditation shall I amuse this waste hour of darkness and vacuity? If I turn my thoughts upon myself, what do I perceive but a poor helpless being, reduced by a blast of wind to weakness and misery? How my present distemper was brought upon me I can give no account, but impute it to some sudden

1 [*Ante*, p. 478.—Ed.]

2 [By *prolong* she must mean *delay*.—Ed.]

3 [His mother was still alive and resident in Lichfield, but he never again visited that town during her life. See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 124 *n.* and 161.—Ed.]

4 [Probably Saturday, 27th December, 1755. These undated notes it is not easy to arrange; but the order the Editor has assigned to them seems probable, and is consistent with the contents. It seems that while Johnson was labouring under some kind of feverish cold, Miss Boothby herself fell ill of a disease of which she died in a fortnight.—Ed.]

5 In Dr. Johnson's handwriting.—Wright. [Probably Sunday, 28th Dec. 1755. Miss Boothby seems to have come to town in the preceding month.—Ed.]

succession of cold to heat; such as in the common road of life cannot be avoided, and against which no precaution can be taken.

"Of the fallaciousness of hope and the uncertainty of schemes, every day gives some new proof; but it is seldom heeded, till something rather felt than seen awakens attention. This illness, in which I have suffered something, and feared much more, has depressed my confidence and elation; and made me consider all that I had promised myself, as less certain to be attained or enjoyed. I have endeavoured to form resolutions of a better life; but I form them weakly, under the consciousness of an external motive. Not that I conceive a time of sickness, a time improper for recollection and good purposes, which I believe diseases and calamities often sent to produce, but because no man can know how little his performance will answer to his promises; and designs are nothing in human eyes till they are realized by execution.

"Continue, my dearest, your prayers for me, that no good resolution may be vain. You think, I believe, better of me than I deserve. I hope to be in time what I wish to be; and what I have hitherto satisfied myself too readily with only wishing.

"Your billet brought me, what I much wished to have, a proof that I am still remembered by you at the hour in which I most desire it.

"The doctor [1] is anxious about you. He thinks you too negligent of yourself; if you will promise to be cautious, I will exchange promises, as we have already exchanged injunctions. However, do not write to me more than you can easily bear; do not interrupt your ease to write at all.

"Mr. Fitzherbert sent to-day to offer me some wine; the people about me say I ought to accept it. I shall therefore be obliged to him if he will send me a bottle.

"There has gone about a report that I died to-day, which I mention, lest you should hear it and be alarmed. You see that I think my death may alarm you; which, for me, is to think very highly of earthly friendship. I believe it arose from the death of one of my neighbours. You know Des Cartes' argument, 'I think, therefore I am.' It is as good a consequence, 'I write; therefore I am alive.' I might give another, 'I am alive; therefore I love Miss Boothby;' but that I hope our friendship may be of far longer duration than life. I am, dearest madam, with sincere affection, yours, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"MISS BOOTHBY TO DR. JOHNSON.

["*December*, 1755 2.]

"MY DEAR SIR,—Would I was able to reply fully to both your kind letters! but at present I am not. I trust we shall both be better soon, with a blessing on our good doctor's means. I have been, as he can tell you, all obedience. As an answer to one part of your letter, I have sent you a little book 3. God bless you. I must defer the rest, till I am more able. Dear sir, your affectionate friend, "H. BOOTHBY.

"Give Cooper some tickets.

"I am glad you sent for the hock. Mr. Fitzherbert has named it more than once.

"Thank you for saving me from what indeed might have greatly hurt me, had I heard or seen in a paper such a ———."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS BOOTHBY.

"Wednesday, December 31, 1755.

"MY SWEET ANGEL,—I have read your book, I am afraid you will think without any great improvement; whether you can read my notes, I know not. You ought not to be offended; I am perhaps as sincere as the writer. In all things that terminate here I shall be much guided by your influence, and should take or leave by your direction; but I cannot receive my religion from any human hand. I desire however to be instructed, and am far from thinking myself perfect.

"I beg you to return the book when you have looked into it. I should not have written what was in the margin, had I not had it from you, or had I not intended to show it to you.

"It affords me a new conviction, that in these books there is little new, except new forms or expression; which may be sometimes taken, even by the writer, for new doctrines.

"I sincerely hope that God, whom you so much desire to serve aright, will bless you, and restore you to health, if he sees best. Surely no human understanding can pray for any thing temporal otherwise than conditionally. Dear angel, do not forget me. My heart is full of tenderness

"It has pleased God to permit me to be much better; which I believe will please you.

"Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy, and I think a very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange peel finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner; the best way is perhaps to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first, and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder, it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off [4].

"I would not have you offer it to the doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders; yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm: do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a day, will be sufficient to begin; or less, if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces; but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of sloes. Has the doctor mentioned the bark? In powder you could hardly take it; perhaps you might take the infusion.

"Do not think me troublesome, I am full of care. I love you and honour you, and am very

1 [Dr. Lawrence.—ED.]

2 In Dr. Johnson's handwriting.—WRIGHT.

3 [Probably not one of Law's works, mentioned in the letter of the 11th October. Dr. Johnson told Mr. Boswell (*ante*, vol. i. p. 24) that Law's *Serious Call* was the first book that ever awoke him to a sense of real religion. The work, whatever it was, lent him by Miss Boothby, he does not seem to have approved.—ED.]

4 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 512.—ED.]

unwilling to lose you. *A dieu je vous recommande.* I am, madam, your, &c.

"My compliments to my dear Miss."

"TO THE SAME.

(*From Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, vol. ii. p.* 391.)

"1st January, 1755[1].

"DEAREST MADAM,—Though I am afraid your illness leaves you little leisure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wishes, that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wish indeed I include myself, who have none but you on whom my heart reposes; yet surely I wish your good, even though your situation were such as should permit you to communicate no gratifications to, dearest madam, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

(*From Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, vol. ii. p.* 392.)

"[January 3d, 1756.]

"DEAREST MADAM,—Nobody but you can recompense me for the distress which I suffered on Monday night. Having engaged Dr. Lawrence to let me know, at whatever hour, the state in which he left you; I concluded, when he stayed so long, that he stayed to see my dearest expire. I was composing myself as I could to hear what yet I hoped not to hear, when his servant brought me word that you were better. Do you continue to grow better? Let my dear little Miss inform me on a card. I would not have you write, lest it should hurt you, and consequently hurt likewise, dearest madam, yours, &c.

"TO THE SAME.

"Thursday, 8th January, 1756.

"HONOURED MADAM,—I beg of you to endeavour to live. I have returned your Law; which, however, I earnestly entreat you to give me. I am in great trouble; if you can write three words to me, be pleased to do it. I am afraid to say much, and cannot say nothing when my dearest is in danger.

"The all-merciful God have mercy on you! I am, madam, your, &c."

"*Miss Boothby died Friday, January* 16, 1756; *upon whose death Dr. Johnson composed the following prayer.* 'Prayers and Meditations,' &c. p. 25.

"*Hill Boothby's death, January*, 1756.—O Lord God, Almighty disposer of all things, in whose hands are life and death, who givest comforts and takest them away, I return thee thanks for the good example of Hill Boothby, whom thou hast now taken away; and implore thy grace that I may improve the opportunity of instruction which thou hast afforded me, by the knowledge of her life, and by the sense of her death; that I may consider the uncertainty of my present state, and apply myself earnestly to the duties which thou hast set before me, that, living in thy fear, I may die in thy favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. I commend, &c. W. and H. B[2].

"*Transcribed June* 26, 1768[3]."

[On a close examination of the foregoing correspondence, it will be seen that the personal communications between Dr. Johnson and Miss Boothby were very limited, and that even during her few and short visits to London their intercourse was hardly as frequent as politeness would have required from common acquaintances.

The Editor admits that several of Miss Boothby's letters contain expressions which, if we did not consider the ages of the parties and all the other circumstances of the case, would sound like something more tender than mere platonism; but the slight intercourse between them during the lady's subsequent visits to town seems to refute that inference.

The general phraseology of Johnson's notes, and the terms "*my dearest*" and "*my angel*," seem strange; but it must be recollected that *dearest dear*, and similar superlatives of tenderness, were usual with him in addressing Miss Reynolds and other ladies for whom he confessedly felt nothing but *friendship;* and they were addressed to Miss Boothby when she was dying, and when the hearts of both were softened by sickness and affliction, and warmed by spiritual communication.

As to the supposed rivalry between him and Lord Lyttleton for Miss Boothby's favour (see *ante*, p. 276), it must be either a total mistake or an absurd exaggeration. Lord Lyttleton was, during the whole of the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson and Miss Boothby, a married man, fondly attached to his wife, and remarkable for the punctilious propriety of his moral conduct; and the *preference* shown by Miss Boothby, and which is said to have rankled in Johnson's heart, could have been nothing more than some incident in a *morning visit*, when Lord Lyttleton and Johnson may have met in Cavendish-square, (for it seems certain that they never met in the country). We have seen in the cases of Lord Chesterfield (vol. i. pp. 110—11, *n.*) and of Miss Cotterell (vol. i. p. 104) how touchy Johnson was on such occasions, and how ready he was to take offence at any thing that looked like slight. Some preference or superior respect shown by Miss Boothby to Lord Lyttleton's rank and public station (he was chancellor of the exchequer in 1755) no doubt offended the sensitive pride of Johnson, and occasioned the dislike which he confessed to Mrs. Thrale he felt for Lord Lyttleton; but an amorous rivalry between them is not only absurd, but impossible.—ED.]

No. VIII.

[NOTE on the words *balance of misery, p.* 387.]

THE Reverend Mr. Ralph Churton, Fellow of Brazen-Nose College, Oxford, has favoured me

1 [Johnson throughout his life was liable to the inadvertence of using the date of the old year in the first days of the new; and has evidently, the Editor thinks, done so in this case; as it does not seem that Miss Boothby was ill in January, 1755.—ED.]

2 [These initials mean, no doubt, *Mr. Williams*, who died a few months before, and *Hill Boothby*.—ED.]

3 [It is not easy to say why Dr. Johnson marked several of his prayers, as *transcribed*. Such a fact *appears* quite immaterial, but no doubt had some particular object.—ED.]

with the following remarks on my work, which he is pleased to say, "I have hitherto extolled, and cordially approve."

The chief part of what I have to observe is contained in the following transcript from a letter to a friend, which, with his concurrence, I copied for this purpose; and, whatever may be the merit or justness of the remarks, you may be sure that being written to a most intimate friend, without any intention that they ever should go further, they are the genuine and undisguised sentiments of the writer:—

"6th January, 1792.

"Last week I was reading the second volume of 'Boswell's Johnson,' with increasing esteem for the worthy author, and increasing veneration of the wonderful and excellent man who is the subject of it. The writer throws in, now and then, very properly, some serious religious reflections; but there is one remark, in my mind an obvious and just one, which I think he has not made, that Johnson's 'morbid melancholy,' and constitutional infirmities, were intended by Providence, like St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, to check intellectual conceit and arrogance; which the consciousness of his extraordinary talents, awake as he was to the voice of praise, might otherwise have generated in a very culpable degree. Another observation strikes me, that in consequence of the same natural indisposition, and habitual sickliness (for he says he scarcely passed one day without pain after his twentieth year), he considered and represented human life as a scene of much greater misery than is generally experienced. There may be persons bowed down with afflictions all their days; and there are those, no doubt, whose iniquities rob them of rest; but neither calamities nor crimes, I hope and believe, do so much and so generally abound, as to justify the dark picture of life which Johnson's imagination designed, and his strong pencil delineated. This I am sure, the colouring is far too gloomy for what I have experienced, though, as far as I can remember, I have had more sickness (I do not say more severe, but only more in quantity) than falls to the lot of most people. But then daily debility and occasional sickness were far overbalanced by intervenient days, and, perhaps, weeks void of pain, and overflowing with comfort. So that in short, to return to the subject, human life, as far as I can perceive from experience or observation, is not that state of constant wretchedness which Johnson always insisted it was: which misrepresentation, for such it surely is, his biographer has not corrected, I suppose, because, unhappily, he has himself a large portion of melancholy in his constitution, and fancied the portrait a faithful copy of life."

The learned writer then proceeds thus in his letter to me:—

"I have conversed with some sensible men on this subject, who all seem to entertain the same sentiments respecting life with those which are expressed or implied in the foregoing paragraph. It might be added, that as the representation here spoken of appears not consistent with fact and experience, so neither does it seem countenanced by scripture. There is, perhaps, no part of the sacred volume which at first sight promises so much to lend its sanction to these dark and desponding notions as the book of Ecclesiastes, which so often, and so emphatically, proclaims the vanity of things sublunary. But 'the design of this whole book (as it has been justly observed) is not to put us out of conceit with life, but to cure our vain expectations of a complete and perfect happiness in this world: to convince us, that there is no such thing to be found in mere external enjoyments;—and to teach us to seek for happiness in the practice of virtue, in the knowledge and love of God, and in the hopes of a better life. For this is the application of all: *Let us hear*, &c. xii. 13. Not only his duty, but his happiness too: *For God*, &c. v. 14.—See 'Sherlock on Providence,' p. 299.

"The New Testament tells us, indeed, and most truly, that 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof:' and, therefore, wisely forbids us to increase our burdens by forebodings of sorrows; but I think it nowhere says, that even our ordinary afflictions are not consistent with a very considerable degree of positive comfort and satisfaction. And, accordingly, one whose sufferings as well as merits were conspicuous assures us, that in proportion 'as the sufferings of Christ abounded in them, so their consolation also abounded by Christ.' 2 Cor. i. 5. It is needless to cite, as indeed it would be endless even to refer to, the multitude of passages in both Testaments holding out, in the strongest language, promises of blessings, even in this world, to the faithful servants of God. I will only refer to St. Luke, xviii. 29, 30, and 1 Tim. iv. 8.

"Upon the whole, setting aside instances of great and lasting bodily pain, of minds peculiarly oppressed by melancholy, and of severe temporal calamities, from which extraordinary cases we surely should not form our estimate of the general tenour and complexion of life; excluding these from the account, I am convinced that as well the gracious constitution of things which Providence has ordained, as the declarations of scripture and the actual condition of individuals, authorize the sincere Christian to hope that his humble and constant endeavours to perform his duty, chequered as the best life is with many failings, will be crowned with a greater degree of present peace, serenity, and comfort, than he could rea sonably permit himself to expect, if he measured his views and judged of life from the opinion of Dr. Johnson, often and energetically expressed in the memoirs of him, without any animadversion or censure by his ingenious biographer. If he himself, upon reviewing the subject, shall see the matter in this light, he will, in an octavo edition, which is eagerly expected, make such additional remarks or corrections as he shall judge fit; lest the impressions which these discouraging passages may leave on the reader's mind should in a degree hinder what otherwise the whole spirit and energy of the work tends, and, I hope, successfully, to promote,—pure morality and true religion."

Though I have, in some degree, obviated any reflections against my illustrious friend's dark views of life, when considering, in the course of

this work, his "Rambler" and his "Rasselas," I am obliged to Mr. Churton for complying with my request of his permission to insert his remarks, being conscious of the weight of what he judiciously suggests as to the melancholy in my own constitution. His more pleasing views of life, I hope, are just. *Valeant quantum valere possunt.*

Mr. Churton concludes his letter to me in these words: "Once, and only once, I had the satisfaction of seeing your illustrious friend; and as I feel a particular regard for all whom he distinguished with his esteem and friendship, so I derive much pleasure from reflecting that I once beheld, though but transiently, near our college gate, one whose works will for ever delight and improve the world, who was a sincere and zealous son of the church of England, an honour to his country, and an ornament to human nature."

His letter was accompanied with a present from himself of his "Sermons at the Bampton Lecture," and from his friend, Dr. Townson, the venerable rector of Malpas, in Cheshire, of his "Discourses on the Gospels," together with the following extract of a letter from that excellent person, who is now gone to receive the reward of his labours: "Mr. Boswell is not only very entertaining in his works, but they are so replete with moral and religious sentiments, without an instance, as far as I know, of a contrary tendency, that I cannot help having a great esteem for him; and if you think such a trifle as a copy of the Discourses, *ex dono authoris*, would be acceptable to him, I should be happy to give him this small testimony of my regard."

Such spontaneous testimonies of approbation from such men, without any personal acquaintance with me, are truly valuable and encouraging.

No. IX.

[CATALOGUE, or List of Designs, *referred to in p. 429.*]

"DIVINITY.

"A small book of precepts and directions for piety; the hint taken from the directions in *Morton's* exercise.

"PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, AND LITERATURE IN GENERAL.

"History of Criticism, as it relates to judging of authours, from Aristotle to the present age. An account of the rise and improvements of that art: of the different opinions of authours, ancient and modern.

"Translation of the History of Herodian.

"New edition of Fairfax's Translation of Tasso, with notes, glossary, &c.

"Chaucer, a new edition of him, from manuscripts and old editions, with various readings, conjectures, remarks on his language, and the changes it had undergone from the earliest times to his age, and from his to the present; with notes explanatory of customs, &c. and references to Boccace, and other authours, from whom he has borrowed, with an account of the liberties he has taken in telling the stories; his life, and an exact etymological glossary.

"Aristotle's Rhetorick, a translation of it into English.

"A Collection of Letters, translated from the modern writers, with some account of the several authours.

"Oldham's Poems, with notes, historical and critical.

"Roscommon's Poems, with notes.

"Lives of the Philosophers, written with a polite air, in such a manner as may divert as well as instruct.

"History of the Heathen Mythology, with an explication of the fables, both allegorical and historical; with references to the poets.

"History of the State of Venice, in a compendious manner.

"Aristotle's Ethicks, an English translation of them, with notes.

"Geographical Dictionary from the French. [*Utrecht.*] MS.

"Hierocles upon Pythagoras, translated into English, perhaps with notes. This is done by Norris. [Nov. 9th, 1752.] MS.

"A book of Letters, upon all kinds of subjects.

"Claudian, a new edition of his works, *cum notis variorum*, in the manner of Burman.

"Tully's Tusculan questions, a translation of them.

"Tully's De Naturâ Deorum, a translation of those books.

"Benzo's New History of the New World, to be translated.

"Machiavel's History of Florence, to be translated.

"History of the Revival of Learning in Europe, containing an account of whatever contributed to the restoration of literature; such as controversies, printing, the destruction of the Greek empire, the encouragement of great men, with the lives of the most eminent patrons, and most eminent early professors of all kinds of learning in different countries.

"A Body of Chronology, in verse, with historical notes. [Nov. 9th, 1752.] MS.

"A Table of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians, distinguished by figures into six degrees of value, with notes, giving the reasons of preference or degradation.

"A Collection of Letters from English authours, with a preface giving some account of the writers; with reasons for selection, and criticism upon styles; remarks on each letter, if needful.

"A Collection of Proverbs from various languages. Jan. 6th,—53.

"A Dictionary to the Common Prayer, in imitation of Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible. March—[17]52.

"A Collection of Stories and Examples, like those of Valerius Maximus. Jan. 10th,—[17]53.

"From Ælian, a volume of select Stories, perhaps from others. Jan. 28th,—[17]53.

"Collection of Travels, Voyages, Adventures, and Descriptions of Countries.

"Dictionary of Ancient History and Mythology.

"Treatise on the Study of Polite Literature, containing the history of learning, directions for editions, commentaries, &c.

"Maxims, Characters, and Sentiments, after the manner of Bruyere, collected out of ancient authours, particularly the Greek, with Apophthegms.

"Classical Miscellanies, Select Translations from ancient Greek and Latin authours.

"Lives of Illustrious Persons, as well of the active as the learned, in imitation of Plutarch.

"Judgment of the learned upon English Authours.

"Poetical Dictionary of the English tongue.

"Consideration upon the present State of London.

"Collection of Epigrams, with notes and observations.

"Observations on the English Language, relating to words, phrases, and modes of speech.

"Minutiæ, Literariæ, Miscellaneous Reflections, Criticisms, Emendations, Notes.

"History of the Constitution.

"Comparison of Philosophical and Christian Morality, by sentences collected from the moralists and fathers.

"Plutarch's Lives in English, with notes.

"POETRY AND WORKS OF IMAGINATION.

"Hymn to Ignorance.

"The Palace of Sloth,—a vision.

"Coluthus, to be translated.

"Prejudice,—a poetical essay.

"The Palace of Nonsense,—a vision."

Johnson's extraordinary facility of composition, when he shook off his constitutional indolence, and resolutely sat down to write, is admirably described by Mr. Courtenay, in his "Poetical Review," which I have several times quoted:

"While through life's maze he sent a piercing view,
His mind expansive to the object grew.
With various stores of erudition fraught,
The lively image, the deep-searching thought,
Slept in repose;—but when the moment press'd,
The bright ideas stood at once confess'd;
Instant his genius sped its vigorous rays,
And o'er the letter'd world diffused a blaze.
As womb'd with fire the cloud electrick flies,
And calmly o'er th' horizon seems to rise:
Touch'd by the pointed steel, the lightning flows,
And all th' expanse with rich effulgence glows."

We shall in vain endeavour to know with exact precision every production of Johnson's pen. He owned to me that he had written about forty sermons; but as I understood that he had given or sold them to different persons, who were to preach them as their own, he did not consider himself at liberty to acknowledge them. Would those who were thus aided by him, who are still alive, and the friends of those who are dead, fairly inform the world, it would be obligingly gratifying a reasonable curiosity, to which there should, I think, now be no objection. Two volumes of them, published since his death, are sufficiently ascertained. *Ante*, p. 124. I have before me in his handwriting a fragment of twenty quarto leaves, of a translation into English of Sallust, *De Bello Catilinario*. When it was done I have no notion; but it seems to have no very superiour merit to mark it as his. Besides the publications heretofore mentioned, I am satisfied, from internal evidence, to admit also as genuine the following, which, notwithstanding all my chronological care, escaped me in the course of this work:

"Considerations on the Case of Dr. Trapp's Sermons," † published in 1739, in the "Gentleman's Magazine." It is a very ingenious defence of the right of abridging an authour's work, without being held as infringing his property. This is one of the nicest questions in the *Law of Literature;* and I cannot help thinking, that the indulgence of abridging is often exceedingly injurious to authours and booksellers, and should in very few cases be permitted. At any rate, to prevent difficult and uncertain discussion, and give an absolute security to authours in the property of their labours, no abridgement whatever should be permitted till after the expiration of such a number of years as the legislature may be pleased to fix.

But, though it has been confidently ascribed to him, I cannot allow that he wrote a dedication to both houses of parliament of a book entitled "The Evangelical History Harmonized." He was no *croaker*, no declaimer against the *times*. He would not have written "That we are fallen upon an age in which corruption is not barely universal, is universally confessed." Nor, "Rapine preys on the publick without opposition, and perjury betrays it without inquiry." Nor would he, to excite a speedy reformation, have conjured up such phantoms of terror as these: "A few years longer, and perhaps all endeavours will be in vain. We may be swallowed by an earthquake; we may be delivered to our enemies." This is not Johnsonian.

There are, indeed, in this dedication several sentences constructed upon the model of those of Johnson. But the imitation of the form, without the spirit of his style, has been so general, that this of itself is not sufficient evidence. Even our newspaper writers aspire to it. In an account of the funeral of Edwin, the comedian, in "The Diary" of Nov. 9, 1790, that son of drollery is thus described: "A man who had so often cheered the sullenness of vacancy, and suspended the approaches of sorrow." And in "The Dublin Evening Post," August 16, 1791, there is the following paragraph: "It is a singular circumstance, that in a city like this, containing 200,000 people, there are three months in the year during which no place of publick amusement is open. Long vacation is here a vacation from pleasure, as well as business; nor is there any mode of passing the listless evenings of declining summer but in the riots of a tavern, or the stupidity of a coffee-house."

I have not thought it necessary to specify every copy of verses written by Johnson, it being my intention to publish an authentick edition of all his poetry with notes.

No. X.

[Dr. JOHNSON'S portraits,—*referred to in page* 450.

The note on Dr. Johnson's portraits being incomplete, the Editor is obliged to Mr. John Murray, junior, for considerable additions to the list, which are distinguished by brackets.]

Date of painting. Engraver's name. Date of engraving.

[Prior to 1752. A miniature, painter unknown, which belonged to Mrs. Johnson, now in the possession of Dr. Harwood. See preface, p. viii. *n.*
First engraved for this edition, size of the original E. Finden 1830.
A three-quarter face to the left (in an oval); he is dressed in what was styled a seven story wig, and holds a pen up to his eye. The likeness apparently taken before any of Sir Joshua's portraits . . No artist's name or date]

BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

[1756. I. Mr. Boswell's picture; sold at James Boswell's sale for seventy guineas. Dr. Johnson in an arm chair, seated at a table with writing materials; pen in his hand.]
4to. for first edition of Boswell's Life J. Heath 1791
Ditto 8vo. for 8vo. edition of ditto J. Baker 1791
[This picture has been repeatedly engraved for various editions of this work.

Before 1770. II. *Now in the Marquis of Stafford's collection.* Side face, to right, eyes almost closed, without wig; showing the nervous habit to which he was addicted, when unemployed, of moving his hands up and down before him, with the fingers extended. It was of this picture that he said, "It is not friendly to hand down to posterity the imperfections of any man."
Sir Joshua is said to have had in his mind this attitude and the abstracted expression of Dr. Johnson's countenance, when he painted the Soothsayer Tiresias in his large picture of the Infant Hercules.
Folio, mezzotint, very fine James Watson 1770
8vo. mezzotint for Sir Joshua's works S. W. Reynolds.

1773. An etching of the head only, from a copy of this picture by Ozias Humphrey Mrs. D. Turner.]

III. Mr. Langton's picture, now at Gunby, near Spilsby, Lincolnshire, the seat of Peregrine Massingberd, Esq. Mr. Langton's second son.
Sheet mezzotint, very fine W. Doughty 1784.
Line, prefixed to Dictionary folio T. Cook 1787
Ditto to Dictionary 4to Ditto. 1787
[Small ditto to Bell's Poets Ditto. 1787
Oval Bromley.
For the Rambler, oval, small size John Hall 1779
Oval, prefixed to first ed. of Lives of the Poets T. Trotter 1779
4to. prefixed to Dictionary J. Heath 1799
In stipple Schavionetti 1809
4to. prefixed to Dictionary W. Holl 1814
A very excellent line engraving for the Dict. published by Robinson W. C. Edwards 1808
Ditto, smaller Ditto 1823
8vo. mezzotint for the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds S. W. Reynolds.]

778. IV. Mrs. Piozzi's picture, *now in the possession of Watson Taylor, Esq.* Three-quarter face, to left, holding a book up to his eye.
In an oval 8vo., for Murphy's ed. of his works J. Hall 1787
Ditto Audinet.
Ditto I. Fittler.
Ditto, face to the right Heath.
Ditto, 12mo. for Cooke's Poets Granger 1799
Prefixed to his works, 1823 W. T. Fry 1816

V. Duke of Dorset's picture at Knole, now Lord Plymouth's; a copy of No. II.]

[BY BARRY.

About 1781. Full face, finished only as far as the shoulders, and copied into one of the large pictures now in the room of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi. The original sketch was sold at Barry's sale to Mr. Manson for 30 guineas.
Engraved in line 4to. size Anker Smith 1808
Ditto, 8vo. with specimens of Dr. Johnson's signature at different periods of his life Audinet 1829]

BY OPIE.

Three-quarter face, to the left. Engraved in an oval, prefixed to Dictionary folio J. Heath 1786
[Do. 4to. Davenport.]
Folio mezzotint C. Townley.* 1792

BY NORTHCOTE.

[Three-quarter face, to right, holding a book I. J. De Claussin 1813]

BY MISS REYNOLDS.

[1783. A miniature. This portrait did not please Dr J., who styled it "Johnson's grimly ghost."]

BY MR. ZOFFANIJ.

BY O. HUMPHREY.

1773. A miniature.

Drawn by Engraver's name. Date of engraving.

[Head in a small oval T. Trotter T. Trotter 1782]
Profile in oval, to the left, without wig Do. Do. 1784
Whole length, in the dress worn by him on the journey to the Hebrides, with his stick, folio Do. Do. 1786
[Side-face, to right, the countenance haggard, and exhibiting marks of decay. This was probably the last portrait for which Dr. Johnson sat it was finished a short time before his death T. Trotter T. Trotter 1786]
[Do. prefixed to Harding's Shakspeare; drawing belonged to Dr. Farmer Do. Do. 1792]
Side-face, to right J. Harding Do. 1782
Medallion, profile to left, with wig, prefixed to the Dictionary F. Bartolozzi Bartolozzi 1785
Ditto for Sharpe's Johnsoniana Do. G. Murray 1820
A wood-cut, on the title-page of Sharpe's edition of this work, in 1 vol. Do. Thompson 1830
[A small oval, profile to right N. Gardiner N. Gardiner 1786.
8vo. profile to right P. S. Lambourn P. S. Lambourn 1791]
Profile to left, prefixed to Johnsoniana Unknown J. Taylor 1756
For "Lavater's Essays on Physiognomy," in which Johnson's countenance is analysed upon the principles of that fanciful writer.

1748. [A view of Tunbridge Wells, in which Dr. and Mrs. Johnson are introduced; the figures very small. See vol. i. p. 36. Loggan. 1804

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* Brother of Mr. Townley, of the Commons, an ingenious artist, who resided some time at Berlin, and has the honour of being engraver to his Majesty the King of Prussia. This is one of the finest mezzotintos that ever was executed; and what renders it of extraordinary value, the plate was destroyed after four or five impressions only were taken off. One of them is in the possession of Sir William Scott.—BOSWELL. [It is probable that these four or five were merely early impressions taken off from the same plate, the dedication to Mr. Boswell, which distinguishes them, having been erased after they were printed.—J. MURRAY, JUN.]

A whole-length, in a cocked hat, ruffles on the hands, holding a stick behind his back
Not known.
There is a whole-length figure in Cambridge's works, 4to., drawn and engraved by Besland.]

BUST BY NOLLEKENS,

1781 Never cut in marble; the first cast from the mould is now the property of Hon. Agar Ellis. Without the wig; the flowing hair which hangs down the neck copied from a beggar, whom Mr. Smith states to have been called from the street to serve as model.
After a drawing from the above Ab. Wivell
W. T. Fry 1815]

STATUE BY BACON.

In St. Paul's; the first monument ever placed in that building.
Repeatedly engraved.
There are also several seals with his head cut on them, particularly a very fine one by that eminent artist, Edward Burch, Esq., R. A.; in the possession of the younger Dr. Chas. Burney
[copied and engraved by
Richter Richter 1797]
Let me add, as a proof of the popularity of his character, that there are copper pieces struck at Birmingham, with his head impressed on them, which pass current as halfpence there and in the neighbouring parts of the country.
[In this list are enumerated, it is believed, all the original portraits of Dr. Johnson, but only the *most remarkable* of the engravings taken from them. The valuable and interesting collection of Henry Smedley, Esq. in which will be found almost every print of him which has been published, contains more than *one hundred* distinct plates, which have been executed at different times.
An illustrated copy of Boswell's Life, belonging to Mr. Smith, of the British Museum, in addition to numerous rare impressions of portraits of Dr. Johnson, is embellished with views of all the houses in which he resided; many of them drawn by Mr. Smith himself.—J. MURRAY, JUN.]

GENERAL APPENDIX.

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GENERAL APPENDIX.

No. I.

Recollections of Dr. Johnson by Miss Reynolds.

Mr. Palmer's *papers contain two manuscripts*[1] *one of Miss Reynold's* Recollections, *both in her own handwriting, nearly the same in substance, but differing a good deal as to the order, and something as to the handling, of the various topics. Miss Reynolds's best style was, as Dr. Johnson himself hinted to her, not a clear one, and in those rambling Recollections scattered over separate sheets of paper, there is a good deal of tautology and confusion, through which the Editor has had some difficulty in discovering any thing like order. He has, however, made an arrangement which, if not quite satisfactory, is at least intelligible. These* Recollections *tell little that is new, but they confirm and explain, and occasionally throw a useful light on some interesting points of Dr. Johnson's manners and character: and although they have not the advantage of having been written while the matters were quite fresh in Miss Reynolds's mind, the long and cordial intimacy between her and Dr. Johnson entitles them to as much confidence as can be placed in* Recollections.—Ed.

"The first time I was in company with Dr. Johnson, which was at Miss Cotterel's, I well remember the flattering notice he took of a lady present, on her saying that she was inclined to estimate the morality of every person according as they liked or disliked Clarissa Harlowe. He was a great admirer of Richardson's works in general, but of Clarissa he always spoke with the highest enthusiastic praise. He used to say that it was the first book in the world for the knowledge it displays of the human heart[2].

"Yet of the author I never heard him speak with any degree of cordiality, but rather as if impressed with some cause of resentment against him; and this has been imputed to something of jealousy, not to say envy, on account of Richardson's having engrossed the attentions and affectionate assiduities of several very ingenious literary ladies, whom he used to call his adopted daughters, and for whom Dr. Johnson had conceived a paternal affection (particularly for two of them, Miss Carter and Miss Mulso, now Mrs. Chapone), previous to their acquaintance with Richardson, and it was said that he thought himself neglected by them on his account.

"Dr Johnson set a higher value upon female friendship than perhaps most men[3], which may reasonably be supposed was not a little enhanced by his acquaintance with those ladies, if it was not originally derived from them. To their society, doubtless, Richardson owed that delicacy of sentiment, that feminine excellence, as I may say, that so peculiarly distinguishes his writings from those of his own sex in general, how high soever they may soar above the other in the more dignified paths of literature, in scientific investigations, and abtruse inquiries.

"Dr. Johnson used to repeat, with very apparent delight, some lines of a poem written by Miss Mulso:

'Say, Stella, what is love, whose cruel power
Robs virtue of content, and youth of joy?
What nymph or goddess, in what fatal hour,
Produced to light the mischief-making boy?
Some say, by Idleness and Pleasure bred,
The smiling babe on beds of roses lay:
There with soft honey'd dews by Fancy fed,
His infant beauties open'd on the day.[4]'

"Dr. Johnson had an uncommon retentive memory for every thing that appeared to him worthy of observation. Whatever he met with in reading, particularly poetry, I believe he seldom required a revisal to be able to repeat verbatim. If not literally so, his deviations were generally improvements. This was the case, in some respects, in Shenstone's poem of the 'Inn,' which I learned from hearing Dr. Johnson repeat it; and I was surprised, on seeing it lately among the authour's works for the first time, to find it so different. One stanza he seems to have extemporized himself:

'*And once again I shape my way*
Through rain, through shine, through thick and thin,
Secure to meet, at close of day,
A kind reception at an inn.'

"He always read amazingly quick, glancing

1 [Mr. Gwatkin's copy of these *Recollections* seems to have been extracted and abridged from the originals by another hand.—Ed.]

2 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 245.—Ed.]

3 ["In his conversation with ladies, he had such a felicity as would put vulgar gallantry out of countenance. Of the female mind he conceived a higher opinion than many men, and, though *he was never suspected of a* blamable *intimacy with any individual of them* (see *ante*, p. 432), had a great esteem for the sex. The defect in his powers of sight rendered him totally insensible to the charms of beauty; but he knew that beauty was the attribute of the sex, and treated all women with such an equal complacency as flattered every one into a belief that she had her share of that or some more valuable endowment. In his discourses with them his compliments had ever a neat and elegant turn: they were never direct, but always implied the merit they were intended to attest."—*Hawkins's Life*, p. 309.—Ed.]

4 [Johnson paid the first of those stanzas the great and undeserved compliment of quoting it in his Dictionary, under the word "Quatrain."—Ed.]

his eye from the top to the bottom of the page in an instant. If he made any pause, it was a compliment to the work; and after seesawing [1] over it a few minutes, generally repeated the passage, especially if it was poetry.

"One day, on taking up Pope's 'Essay on Man,' a particular passage seemed more than ordinary to engage his attention; so much so indeed that, contrary to his usual custom, after he had left the book and the seat in which he was sitting, he returned to revise it, turning over the pages with anxiety to find it, and then repeated,

'Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,
List under Reason, and deserve her care:
Those that, imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.'
EPIS. ii. v. 96.

His task, probably, was the whole paragraph, but these lines only were audible.

"He seemed much to delight in reciting verses, particularly from Pope. Among the many I have had the pleasure of hearing him recite, the conclusion of the 'Dunciad;' and his Epistle to Jervas, seemed to claim his highest admiration.

'Led by some rule that guides, but not constrains,
And finish'd more through happiness than pains[2],'

he used to remark, was a union that constituted the ultimate degree of excellence in the fine arts.

"Two lines also from Pope's 'Universal Prayer' I have heard him quote, in very serious conversation, as his theological creed:

'And binding Nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.'

"Some lines also he used to repeat in his best manner, written in memory of Bishop Boulter [3], which I believe are not much known.

Some write their wrongs in marble; he, more just,
Stoop'd down serene and wrote them in the dust;
Trod under foot, the sport of every wind,
Swept from the earth, and blotted from his mind.
There, secret in the grave, he bade them lie,
And grieved they could not 'scape the Almighty's eye.'

"A lady who had learnt them from Dr. Johnson thought she had made a mistake, or had forgot some words, as she could not make out a reference to *there*, and mentioned it to him. 'No,' he said, 'she had not;' and after seesawing a few minutes, said something that indicated surprise, that he should not have made the same remark before.

"Some time after, he told the lady that these lines were inserted in the last edition of his Dictionary, under the word SPORT [4].

"Of Goldsmith's Traveller he used to speak in terms of the highest commendation. A lady [5] I remember, who had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Johnson read it from the beginning to the end on its first coming out, to testify her admiration of it, exclaimed, 'I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly.' In having thought so, however, she was by no means singular; an instance of which I am rather inclined to mention, because it involves a remarkable one of Dr. Johnson's ready wit: for this lady, one evening being in a large party, was called upon after supper for her toast, and seeming embarrassed, she was desired to give the ugliest man she knew; and she immediately named Dr. Goldsmith, on which a lady [6] on the other side of the table rose up and reached across to shake hands with her, expressing some desire of being better acquainted with her, it being the first time they had met; on which Dr. Johnson said, 'Thus the ancients, on the commencement of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast betwixt them.'

"Sir Joshua, I have often thought, never gave a more striking proof of his excellence in portrait painting, than in giving dignity to Dr. Goldsmith's countenance, and yet preserving a strong likeness. But he drew after his mind, or rather his genius, if I may be allowed to make that distinction, assimilating the one with his conversation, the other with his works.

"Dr. Goldsmith's cast of countenance, and indeed his whole figure from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with an idea of his being a low mechanic—particularly, I believe, a journeyman tailor. A little concurring instance of this I well remember. One day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, in company with some gentlemen and ladies, he was relating with great indignation an insult he had just received from some gentleman he had accidentally met (I think at a coffee-house). 'The fellow,' he said, 'took me for a tailor!' on which all the party either laughed aloud or showed they suppressed a laugh.

"Dr. Johnson seemed to have much more kindness for Goldsmith, than Goldsmith had for him. He always appeared to be overawed by Johnson, particularly when in company with people of any consequence, always as if impressed with some fear of disgrace, and indeed well he might. I have been witness to many mortifications he has suffered in Dr. Johnson's company: one day in particular, at Sir Joshua's table, a gentleman to whom he was talking his best stopped him, in the midst of his discourse, with 'Hush! hush! Dr. Johnson is going to say something.'

"At another time, a gentleman who was sitting between Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith, and with whom he had been disputing, remarked to another, loud enough for Goldsmith to hear him, 'That he had a fine time of it, between *Ursa major* and *Ursa minor*[7]!'

"Mr. Baretti used to remark (with a smile) that Dr. Johnson always talked his best to the ladies. But indeed that was his general practice to

1 "A lady said pleasantly of Dr. Johnson's strange movement, or oscillation while reading, that "*his head swung seconds.*"—*Miss Hawkins's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 216.—ED.]

2 Epistle to Jervas.—MISS REYNOLDS.

3 [By Dr. Madden. See *ante*, v. i. p. 137.—ED.]

4 [They are so. We see in this case, and that of Miss Mulso (*ante*, p. 491), that Dr. Johnson's personal partialities induced him to quote in his Dictionary authors who 'had no business there." See *ante*, v. i. p. 137, the motive of his gratitude to Madden.—ED.]

5 [Miss Reynolds herself.—ED.]

6 Mrs. Cholmondely.—MISS REYNOLDS.

7 [The Editor has preserved this specimen, as a striking instance of the easy fabrication of what are called *anecdotes*, and of how little even the best authorities can be relied on in such matters. The real anecdote was of *Doctor Major* and *Doctor Minor* (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 353), by no means so happy as the fabrication, and the title of *Ursa Major* was applied to Johnson by old Lord Auchinlech (*ante*, p. 459). From these two facts the pleasant fallacy quoted by Miss Reynolds was no doubt compounded.—ED.]

ac who would furnish him with a subject worthy of his discussion; for, what was very singular in him, he would rarely, if ever, begin any subject himself, but would sit silent [1] till something was particularly addressed to him, and if that happened to lead to any scientific or moral inquiry, his benevolence, I believe, more immediately incited him to expatiate on it for the edification of the ignorant than for any other motive whatever.

"One day, on a lady's telling him that she had read Parnell's 'Hermit' with dissatisfaction, for she could not help thinking that thieves and murderers, who were such immediate ministers from heaven of good to man, did not deserve such punishments as our laws inflict, Dr. Johnson spoke such an eloquent oration, so deeply philosophical, as indeed afforded a most striking instance of the truth of Baretti's observation, but of which, to my great regret, I can give no corroborating proof, my memory furnishing me with nothing more than barely the general tendency of his arguments, which was to prove, that though it might be said that wicked men, as well as the good, were ministers of God, because in the moral sphere the good we enjoy and the evil we suffer are administered to us by man, yet, as infinite goodness could not inspire or influence man to act wickedly, but, on the contrary, it was his divine property to produce good out of evil, and as man was endowed with free-will to act, or to refrain from acting wickedly, with knowledge of good and evil, with conscience to admonish and to direct him to choose the one and to reject the other, he was, therefore, as criminal in the sight of God and of man, and as deserving punishment for his evil deeds, as if no good had resulted from them.

"And yet, though, to the best of my remembrance, this was the substance of Dr. Johnson's discourse in answer to the lady's observation, I am rather apprehensive that in some respects it may be thought inconsistent with his general assertions, that man was by nature much more inclined to evil than to good. But it would ill become me to expatiate on such a subject.

"Yet what can be said to reconcile his opinion of the natural tendency of the human heart to evil with his own zealous virtuous propensions? Nothing perhaps, at least by me, *but* that this opinion, I believe, was founded upon religious principles relating to original sin; and I well remember that, when disputing with a person on this subject, who thought that nature, reason, and virtue were the constituent principles of humanity, he would say, 'Nay, nay, if man is by nature prompted to act virtuously, all the divine precepts of the gospel, all its denunciations, all the laws enacted by man to restrain man from evil, had been needless.'

"It is certain that he would scarcely allow any one to feel much for the distresses of others; or whatever he thought they might feel, he was very apt to impute to causes that did no honour to human nature. Indeed I thought him rather too fond of Rochefoucault maxims.

"The very strict watch he apparently kept over his mind seems to correspond with his thorough conviction of nature's evil propensions; but it might be as likely in consequence of his dread of those peculiar ones, whatever they were, which attended, or rather constituted his mental malady, which, I have observed, might probably have incited him so often to pray; and I impute it to the same cause, that he so frequently, with great earnestness, desired his intimate acquaintance to pray for him, apparently on very slight occasions of corporeal disorder.

[Here followed an expression of surprise at his having desired a prayer from Dr. Dodd, and several particulars of that story, already amply told *ante*, pp. 104 *et seq.*, and 118.]

"And another axiom of his, of the same tendency, was, that the pains and miseries incident to human life far outweighed its happiness and good. [Vol. i. p. 521 [2].]

"But indeed much may be said in Dr. Johnson's justification, supposing this notion should not meet with universal approbation, having, it is probable, imbibed them in the early part of his life when under the pressure of adverse fortune, and in every period of it under the still heavier pressure and more adverse influence of Nature herself; for I have often heard him lament that he inherited from his father a morbid disposition both of body and of mind—*an oppressive melancholy, which robbed him of the common enjoyments of life* [3].

"Indeed he seemed to struggle almost incessantly with some mental evil, and often by the expression of his countenance and the motion of his lips appeared to be offering up some ejaculation to Heaven to remove it. But in Lent, or near the approach of any great festival, he would generally retire from the company to a corner of the room, but most commonly behind a window-curtain, to pray, and with such energy, and in so loud a whisper, that every word was heard distinctly, particularly the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, with which he constantly concluded his devotions. Sometimes some words would emphatically escape him in his usual tone of voice [4].

"At these holy seasons he secluded himself more from society than at other times, at least from general and mixed society; and on a gentleman's sending him an invitation to dinner on Easter Eve he was highly offended, and expressed himself so in his answer.

"Probably his studious attention to the secret workings of his *peculiar mental infirmity*, together with his experience of divine assistance co-operating with his reasoning faculties, to repel its force, may have proved in the highest degree conducive to the exaltation of his piety, and the pre-eminence of his wisdom. And I think it equally probable, that all his natural defects were conducive to that end; for being so peculiarly debarred from the enjoyments of those amusements which the eye and the ear afford, doubtless he sought more assiduously for those gratifications which scientific pursuits or philosophic meditation bestow.

1 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 345.—Ed.]

2 [Where passages from these "Recollections" have been introduced in the text of the preceding volume, these marks refer to the places where they are to be found.—Ed.]

3 [This last paragraph was originally written, "*terrifying melancholy, which he was sometimes apprehensive bordered on insanity.*" This Miss Reynolds softened into the remark as it stands above.—Ed.]

4 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 333.—Ed.]

"These defects sufficiently account for his insensibility of the charms of music and of painting, being utterly incapable of receiving any delight from the one or the other, particularly from painting, his sight being more deficient than his hearing.

"Of the *superficies* of the fine arts, or visible objects of taste, he could have had but an imperfect idea; but as to the invisible principles of a natural good taste, doubtless he was possessed of these in the most eminent degree, and I should have thought it a strange inconsistency indeed in his character, had he really wanted a taste for music; but as a proof that he did not, I think I had need only mention, that he was remarkably fond of Dr. Burney's History of Music[1], and that he said it showed that the authour understood the philosophy of music better than any man that ever wrote on that subject.

"It is certain that, when in the company of connoisseurs, whose conversation has turned chiefly upon the merits of the attractive charms of painting, perhaps of pictures that were immediately under their inspection, Dr. Johnson, I have thought, used to appear as if conscious of his unbecoming situation, or rather, I might say, suspicious that it was an unbecoming situation.

"But it was observable, that he rather avoided the discovery of it, for when asked his opinion of the likeness of any portrait of a friend, he has generally evaded the question, and if obliged to examine it, he has held the picture most ridiculously, quite close to his eye, just as he held his book. But he was so unwilling to expose that defect, that he was much displeased with Sir Joshua, I remember, for drawing him with his book held in that manner, which, I believe, was the cause of that picture being left unfinished[2].

"On every occasion that had the least tendency to depreciate religion or morality, he totally disregarded all forms or rules of good-breeding, as utterly unworthy of the slightest consideration.

"But it must be confessed that he sometimes suffered this noble principle to transgress its due bounds, and to extend even to those who were any ways connected with the person who had offended him.

"His treatment of Mr. Israel Wilkes [related *ante*, p. 72,] was mild in comparison of what a gentleman[3] met with from him one day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, a barrister-at-law and a man of fashion, who, on discoursing with Dr. (then Mr.) Johnson on the laws and government of different nations (I remember particularly those of Venice), and happening to speak of them in terms of high approbation: 'Yes, sir,' says Johnson, 'all republican rascals think as you do.' How the conversation ended I have forgot, it was so many years ago; but that he made no apology to the gentleman I am very sure, nor to any person present, for such an outrage against society.

"Of latter years he grew much more companionable, and I have heard him say, that he knew himself to be so. 'In my younger days,' he would say, 'it is true I was much inclined to treat mankind with asperity and contempt; but I found it answered no good end. I thought it wiser and better to take the world as it goes. Besides, as I have advanced in life I have had more reason to be satisfied with it. Mankind have treated me with more kindness, and of course I have more kindness for them.'

"In the latter part of his life, indeed, his circumstances were very different from what they were in the beginning. Before he had the pension, he literally dressed like a beggar[4]; and from what I have been told, he as literally lived as such; at least as to common conveniences in his apartments, wanting even a chair to sit on, particularly in his study, where a gentleman who frequently visited him whilst writing his Idlers constantly found him at his desk, sitting on one with three legs; and on rising from it, he remarked that Dr. Johnson never forgot its defect, but would either hold it in his hand or place it with great composure against some support, taking no notice of its imperfection to his visitor. Whether the visitor sat on a chair, or on a pile of folios[5], or how he sat, I never remember to have been told.

"It was remarkable in Dr. Johnson, that no external circumstances ever prompted him to make any apology, or to seem even sensible of their existence. Whether this was the effect of philosophick pride, or of some partial notion of his respecting high-breeding, is doubtful. Strange as it may appear, he scrupled not to boast, that 'no man knew the rules of true politeness better than himself;' and stranger still, 'that no man more attentively practised them.'

"He particularly piqued himself upon his nice observance of ceremonious punctilios towards ladies. A remarkable instance of this was his never suffering any lady to walk from his house to her carriage, through Bolt-court, unattended by himself to hand her into it (at least I have reason to suppose it to be his general custom, from his constant performance of it to those with whom he was the most intimately acquainted); and if any obstacle prevented it from driving off, there he would stand by the door of it, and gather a mob around him; indeed, they would begin to gather the moment he appeared handing the lady down the steps into Fleet-street. But to describe his appearance—his important air—that indeed cannot be described; and his morning habiliments would excite the utmost astonishment in my read-

1 [Miss Reynolds will hardly convince any one that Dr. Johnson was fond of *music* by proving that he was fond of his friend Dr. Burney's History of Music. The truth is, he held both painting and music in great contempt, because his organs afforded him no adequate perception of either.—Ed.]

2 [This however, or a similar picture, was finished and engraved as the frontispiece of Murphy's edition of Dr. Johnson's works.—Ed.]

3 Mr. Elliot.—Miss Reynolds

4 [See *post*, in Miss Hawkins's Anecdotes, how differ ent his appearance was after the pension.—Ed.]

5 ["He had a large but not a splendid library, near 5000 volumes. Many authours, not in hostility with him, presented him with their works. But his study did not contain half his books. He possessed the chair that belonged to the Ciceronian Dr. King of Oxford, which was given him by his friend Vansittart. It answers the purposes of reading and writing, by night or by day; and is as valuable in all respects as the chair of Ariosto, as delineated in the preface to Hoole's liberal translation of that poet. Since the rounding of this period, intelligence is brought that this literary chair is purchased by Mr Hoole. Relicks are venerable things, and are only not to be worshipped. On the reading-chair of Mr. Speaker Onslow, a part of this historical sketch was written."—Tyers.—Ed.]

er, that a man in his senses could think of stepping outside his door in them, or even to be seen at home! Sometimes he exhibited himself at the distance of eight or ten doors from Bolt-court, to get at the carriage, to the no small diversion of the populace[1]. And I am certain that, to those who love laughing, a description of his dress from head to foot would be highly acceptable, and in general I believe be thought the most curious part of my book; but I forbear, out of respect to his memory, to give more than this slight intimation of it; for, having written a minute description of his figure, from his wig to his slippers, a thought occurred that it might probably excite some person to delineate it, and I might have the mortification to see it hung up at a printshop as the greatest curiosity ever exhibited.

"His best dress was, in his early times, so very mean, that one afternoon, as he was following some ladies up stairs, on a visit to a lady of fashion (Miss Cotterel[2]), the servant, not knowing him, suddenly seized him by the shoulder, and exclaimed, 'Where are you going?' striving at the same time to drag him back; but a gentleman[3] who was a few steps behind prevented her from doing or saying more, and Mr. Johnson growled all the way up stairs, as well he might. He seemed much chagrined and discomposed. Unluckily, whilst in this humour, a lady of high rank[4] happening to call upon Miss Cotterel, he was most violently offended with her for not introducing him to her ladyship, and still more so for her seeming to show more attention to her than to him. After sitting some time silent, meditating how to *down* Miss Cotterel, he addressed himself to Mr. Reynolds, who sat next him, and, after a few introductory words, with a loud voice said, 'I wonder which of us two could get most money at his trade in one week, were we to work hard at it from morning till night.' I do n't remember the answer; but I know that the lady, rising soon after, went away without knowing what trade they were of. She might probably suspect Mr. Johnson to be a poor authour by his dress; and because the trade of neither a blacksmith, a porter, or a chairman, which she probably would have taken him for in the street, was not quite so suitable to the place she saw him in.

"This incident he used to mention with great glee—how he had *downed* Miss Cotterel, though at the same time he professed a great friendship and esteem for that lady.

"It is certain, for such kind of mortifications, he never expressed any concern; but on other occasions he has shown an amiable sorrow[5] for the offence he has given, particularly if it seemed to involve the slightest disrespect to the church or to its ministers.

[*Ante*, pp. 299, 40, 131, 252.]

"It is with much regret that I reflect on my stupid negligence to write down some of his discourses, his observations, precepts, &c. The following few short sentences only did I ever take any account of in writing; and these, which I lately found in an old memorandum pocket-book, of ancient date, were made soon after the commencement of my acquaintance with him. A few others, indeed, relating to the character of the French (*ante*, p. 19), were taken *vivâ voce*, the day after his arrival from France, Nov. 14, 1775, intending them for the subject of a letter to a friend in the country.

"Talking on the subject of scepticism:—

"JOHNSON. 'The eyes of the mind are like the eyes of the body; they can see only at such a distance: but because we cannot see beyond this point, is there nothing beyond it?'

"Talking of the want of memory:—

"JOHNSON. 'No, sir, it is not true; in general every person has an equal capacity for reminiscence, and for one thing as well as another, otherwise it would be like a person complaining that he could hold silver in his hand, but could not hold copper.'

"A GENTLEMAN. 'I think when a person laughs alone he supposes himself for the moment with company.' JOHNSON. 'Yes, if it be true that laughter is a comparison of self-superiority, you must suppose some person with you.'

"'No, sir,' he once said, 'people are not born with a particular genius for particular employments or studies, for it would be like saying that a man could see a great way east, but could not west. It is good sense applied with diligence to what was at first a mere accident, and which, by great application, grew to be called, by the generality of mankind, a particular genius.'

"Some person advanced, that a lively imagination disqualified the mind from fixing steadily upon objects which required serious and minute investigation. JOHNSON. 'It is true, sir, a vivacious quick imagination does sometimes give a confused idea of things, and which do not fix deep; though, at the same time, he has a capacity to fix them in his memory if he would endeavour at it. It being like a man that, when he is running, does not make observations on what he meets with, and consequently is not impressed by them; but he has, nevertheless, the power of stopping and informing himself.'

"A gentleman was mentioning it as a remark of an acquaintance of his, 'that he never knew but one person that was completely wicked.' JOHNSON. 'Sir, I do n't know what you mean by a person completely wicked.' GENTLEMAN. 'Why, any one that has entirely got rid of all shame.' JOHNSON. 'How is he, then, completely wicked? He must get rid too of all conscience.' GENTLEMAN. 'I think conscience and shame the same thing.' JOHNSON. 'I am

1 [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 189.—ED.]

2 [His acquaintance with this lady and her sister, who married Dean Lewis, continued to the last days of his life. He says in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, "I know not whether I told you that my old friend *Mrs.* Cotterel, now no longer *Miss*, has called to see me. Mrs. Lewis is not well.—*26th April*, 1784." It is gratifying to observe how many of Johnson's earliest friends continued so to the last.—ED.]

3 [Sir Joshua (then Mr.) Reynolds.—ED.]

4 Lady Fitzroy.—MISS REYNOLDS. [See *ante*, v. i. p. 104, where this story is told of the Duchess of Argyll and another lady of high rank: that other lady was no doubt the person erroneously designated by Miss Reynolds as *Lady Fitzroy*. She probably was Elizabeth Cosby, wife of Lord Augustus Fitzroy, and grandmother of the present Duke of Grafton.—ED.]

5 ["He repented just as certainly however, if he had been led to praise any person or thing by accident more than he thought it deserved; and was on such occasions comically earnest to destroy the praise or pleasure he had unintentionally given."—*Piozzi's Anecdotes*, p. 75 ED.]

surprised to hear you say so; they spring from two different sources, and are distinct perceptions: one respects this world, the other the next.' A LADY. 'I think, however, that a person who has got rid of shame is in a fair way to get rid of conscience.' JOHNSON. 'Yes, 'tis a part of the way, I grant; but there are degrees at which men stop, some for the fear of men, some for the fear of God: shame arises from the fear of men, conscience from the fear of God.'

"Dr. Johnson seemed to delight in drawing characters; and when he did so *con amore*, delighted every one that heard him. Indeed I cannot say I ever heard him draw any *con odio*, though he professed himself to be, or at least to love, a *good hater*. But I have remarked that his dislike of any one seldom prompted him to say much more than that the fellow is a *blockhead*, a *poor creature*, or some such epithet.

"I shall never forget the exalted character he drew of his friend Mr. Langton, nor with what energy, what fond delight, he expatiated in his praise, giving him every excellence that nature could bestow, and every perfection that humanity could acquire[1]. A literary lady was present, Miss H. More, who perhaps inspired him with an unusual ardour to shine, which indeed he did with redoubled lustre, deserving himself the praises he bestowed; not but I have often heard him speak in terms equally high of Mr. Langton, though more concisely expressed.

"This brings to my remembrance the unparalleled eulogium which the late Lord Bath made on a lady he was intimately acquainted with, in speaking of her to Sir Joshua Reynolds. His lordship said that he did not believe that there ever was a more perfect human being created, or ever would be created, than Mrs. Montagu. I give the very words I heard from Sir Joshua's mouth; from whom also I heard that he repeated them to Mr. Burke—observing that Lord Bath could not have said more, 'And I do not think that he said too much,' was Mr. Burke's reply. I have also heard Dr. Johnson speak of this lady in terms of high admiration. [*Ante*, p. 66.]

"On the praises of Mrs. Thrale he used to dwell with a peculiar delight, a paternal fondness, expressive of conscious exultation in being so intimately acquainted with her. One day, in speaking of her to Mr. Harris, authour of 'Hermes,' and expatiating on her various perfections,—the solidity of her virtues, the brilliancy of her wit, and the strength of her understanding, &c.—he quoted some lines (a stanza I believe, but from what authour I know not), with which he concluded his most eloquent eulogium, and of these I retained but the two last lines[2]:

> Virtues—of such a generous kind,
> Good in the last recesses of the mind.'

"It will doubtless appear highly paradoxical to the generality of the world to say, that few men, in his ordinary disposition, or common frame of mind, could be more inoffensive than Dr. Johnson; yet surely those who knew his uniform benevolence, and its actuating principles—steady virtue, and true holiness—will readily agree with me, that peace and good-will towards man were the natural emanations of his heart.

"When travelling with a lady[3] in Devonshire, in a post-chaise, near the churchyard of Wear, near Torrington, in which she saw the verdant monument of maternal affection described in the *Melancholy Tale*, and heard the particular circumstances relating to the subject of it; and as she was relating them to Dr. Johnson, she heard him heave heavy sighs and sobs, and turning round she saw his dear face bathed in tears! A circumstance he had probably forgotten when he wrote at the end of the manuscript poem with his correcting pen in red ink, *I know not when I have been so much affected.*

"I believe no one has described his extraordinary gestures or anticks[4] with his hands and feet, particularly when passing over the threshold of a door, or rather before he would venture to pass through any doorway. On entering Sir Joshua's house with poor Mrs. Williams, a blind lady who lived with him, he would quit her hand, or else whirl her about on the steps as he whirled and twisted about to perform his gesticulations; and as soon as he had finished, he would give a sudden spring, and make such an extensive stride over the threshold, as if he was trying for a wager how far he could stride, Mrs. Williams standing groping about outside the door, unless the servant took hold of her hand to conduct her in, leaving Dr. Johnson to perform at the parlour door much the same exercise over again.

"But it was not only at the entrance of a door that he exhibited such strange manœuvres, but across a room or in the street with company, he has stopped on a sudden, as if he had recollected his task, and began to perform it there, gathering a mob round him; and when he had finished would hasten to his companion (who probably had walked on before) with an air of great satisfaction that he had done his duty!

"On Sunday morning, as I was walking with him in Twickenham meadows, he began his anticks both with his feet and hands, with the latter as if he was holding the reins of a horse like a jockey on full speed. But to describe the strange positions of his feet is a difficult task; sometimes he would make the back part of his heels to touch, sometimes his toes, as if he was aiming at making the form of a triangle, at least the two sides of one. Though, indeed, whether these were his gestures on this particular occasion in Twickenham meadows I do no recollect, it is so long since; but I well remember that they were so extraordinary that men, women, and children gathered round him, laughing. At last we sat down on some logs of wood by the river side, and they nearly dispersed; when he pulled out of his pocket 'Grotius *de Veritate Religionis*,' over which he seesawed at such a violent rate as to excite the curiosity of some people at a distance to come and see what was the matter with him.

1 [See *ante*, pp. 141 and 379.—ED.]

2 Being so particularly engaged as not to be able to attend to them sufficiently.—MISS REYNOLDS.

3 [Miss Reynolds herself; and the *Melancholy Tale* was probably a poem which he had written on this event, whatever it was.—ED.]

4 [Mr. Boswell frequently (vol. i. pp. 56 and 325) and Mr. Whyte (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 215 and 510), have described his gestures very strikingly, though not quite in so much detail as Miss Reynolds. Mr Boswell's description she must have seen.—ED.]

"He always carried a religious treatise in his pocket on a Sunday, and he used to encourage me to relate to him the particular parts of Scripture I did not understand, and to write them down as they occurred to me in reading the Bible.

"As we were returning from the meadows that day, I remember we met Sir John Hawkins, whom Dr. Johnson seemed much rejoiced to see; and no wonder, for I have often heard him speak of Sir John in terms expressive of great esteem and much cordiality of friendship. On his asking Dr. Johnson when he had seen Dr. Hawkesworth, he roared out with great vehemency, 'Hawkesworth is grown a coxcomb, and I have done with him.' We drank tea that afternoon at Sir J. Hawkins's, and on our return I was surprised to hear Dr. Johnson's minute criticism on Lady Hawkins's dress, with every part of which almost he found fault. [*Ante*, p. 69.]

"Few people (I have heard him say) understood the art of carving better than himself; but that it would be highly indecorous in him to attempt it in company, being so nearsighted, that it required a suspension of his breath during the operation.

"It must be owned indeed that it was to be regretted that he did not practise a little of that delicacy in eating, for he appeared to want breath more at that time than usual.

"It is certain that he did not appear to the best advantage at the hour of repast; but of this he was perfectly unconscious, owing probably to his being totally ignorant of the characteristic expressions of the human countenance, and therefore he could have no conception that his own expressed when most pleased any thing displeasing to others; for, though, when particularly directing his attention towards any object to spy out defects or perfections, he generally succeeded better than most men; partly, perhaps, from a desire to excite admiration of his perspicacity, of which he was not a little ambitious—yet I have heard him say, and I have often perceived, that he could not distinguish any man's face half a yard distant from him, not even his most intimate acquaintance. [*Ante*, pp. 187, and 286.]

"Though it cannot be said that he was in manners gentle, yet it justly can that he was in affections mild, benevolent, and compassionate; and to this combination of character may I believe be ascribed in a great measure his extraordinary celebrity; his being beheld as a phenomenon or wonder of the age!

"And yet Dr. Johnson's character, singular as it certainly was from the contrast of his mental endowments with the roughness of his manners, was, I believe, perfectly natural and consistent throughout; and to those who were intimately acquainted with him must I imagine have appeared so. For being totally devoid of all deceit, free from every tinge of affectation or ostentation, and unwarped by any vice, his singularities, those strong lights and shades that so peculiarly distinguish his character, may the more easily be traced to their primary and natural causes.

"The luminous parts of his character, his soft affections, and I should suppose his strong intellectual powers, at least the dignified charm or radiancy of them, must be allowed to owe their origin to his strict, his rigid principles of religion and virtue; and the shadowy parts of his character, his rough, unaccommodating manners, were in general to be ascribed to those corporeal defects that I have already observed naturally tended to darken his perceptions of what may be called propriety and impropriety in general conversation; and of course in the ceremonious or artificial sphere of society gave his deportment so contrasting an aspect to the apparent softness and general uniformity of cultivated manners.

"And perhaps the joint influence of these two primeval causes, his intellectual excellence and his corporeal defects, naturally contributed to give his manners a greater degree of harshness than they would have had if only under the influence of one of them, the imperfect perceptions of the one not unfrequently producing misconceptions in the other.

"Besides these, many other equally natural causes concurred to constitute the singularity of Dr. Johnson's character. Doubtless the progress of his education had a double tendency to brighten and to obscure it. But I must observe, that this obscurity (implying only his awkward uncouth appearance, his ignorance of the rules of politeness, &c.) would have gradually disappeared at a more advanced period, at least could have had no manner of influence to the prejudice of Dr. Johnson's character, had it not been associated with those corporeal defects above mentioned. But unhappily his untaught, uncivilized manner seemed to render every little indecorum or impropriety that he committed doubly indecorous and improper."

II.

MISCELLANEOUS ANECDOTES OF DR. JOHNSON.

[*The Editor is well aware of the general inaccuracy of what are called* anecdotes, *and has accordingly admitted very few additions of that kind to either the text or notes of this work; but there are several anecdotes current in literature and society, which the reader may not be sorry to see in this place. Some of them stand on the authority of the relater; some are confirmed by, or confirmatory of anecdotes already told; others again require to be noticed either for explanation or correction; and all may be considered as fairly coming within the scope of a work the peculiar object of which is to collect into one view all that can elucidate the biography of Dr. Johnson.*—ED.

SOME ACCOUNT OF DR. JOHNSON.

FROM MR. CUMBERLAND'S MEMOIRS.

"Who will say that Johnson would have been such a champion in literature—such a front-rank soldier in the fields of fame, if he had not been pressed into the service, and driven on to glory with the bayonet of sharp necessity pointed at his

back? If fortune had turned him into a field of clover, he would have laid down and rolled in it. The mere manual labour of writing would not have allowed his lassitude and love of ease to have taken the pen out of the inkhorn, unless the cravings of hunger had reminded him that he must fill the sheet before he saw the table-cloth. He might indeed have knocked down Osburne for a blockhead, but he would not have knocked him down with a folio of his own writing. He would perhaps have been the dictator of a club, and wherever he sat down to conversation, there must have been that splash of strong bold thought about him, that we might still have had a *collectanea* after his death; but of prose I guess not much, of works of labour none, of fancy perhaps something more, especially of poetry, which under favour I conceive was not his tower of strength. I think we should have had his Rasselas at all events, for he was likely enough to have written at Voltaire, and brought the question to the test, if infidelity is any aid to wit. An orator he must have been; not improbably a parliamentarian, and, if such, certainly an oppositionist, for he preferred to talk against the tide. He would indubitably have been no member of the Whig Club, no partisan of Wilkes, no friend of Hume, no believer in Macpherson; he would have put up prayers for early rising, and laid in bed all day, and with the most active resolutions possible been the most indolent mortal living. He was a good man by nature, a great man by genius; we are now to inquire what he was by compulsion.

"Johnson's first style was naturally energetic, his middle style was turgid to a fault, his latter style was softened down and harmonized into periods, more tuneful and more intelligible. His execution was rapid, yet his mind was not easily provoked into exertion; the variety we find in his writings was not the variety of choice arising from the impulse of his proper genius, but tasks imposed upon him by the dealers in ink, and contracts on his part submitted to in satisfaction of the pressing calls of hungry want; for painful as it is to relate, I have heard that illustrious scholar assert (and he never varied from the truth of fact) that he subsisted himself for a considerable space of time upon the scanty pittance of fourpence halfpenny per day. Alas! I am not fit to paint his character; nor is there need of it; *Etiam mortuus loquitur:* every man, who can buy a book, has bought a Boswell: Johnson is known to all the reading world. I also knew him well, respected him highly, loved him sincerely: it was never my chance to see him in those moments of moroseness and ill-humour which are imputed to him, perhaps with truth, for who would slander him? But I am not warranted by any experience of those humours to speak of him otherwise than of a friend, who always met me with kindness, and from whom I never separated without regret. When I sought his company he had no capricious excuses for withholding it, but lent himself to every invitation with cordiality, and brought good-humour with him, that gave life to the circle he was in.

"He presented himself always in his fashion of apparel: a brown coat with metal buttons, black waistcoat and worsted stockings, with a flowing bob wig, was the style of his wardrobe, but they were in perfectly good trim, and with the ladies, which he generally met, he had nothing of the slovenly philosopher about him; he fed heartily, but not voraciously, and was extremely courteous in his commendations of any dish that pleased his palate; he suffered his next neighbour to squeeze the China oranges into his wine-glass after dinner, which else perchance had gone aside and trickled into his shoes, for the good man had neither straight sight nor steady nerves.

"At the tea-table he had considerable demands upon his favourite beverage, and I remember when Sir Joshua Reynolds at my house reminded him that he had drank eleven cups, he replied, 'Sir, I did not count your glasses of wine, why should you number up my cups of tea?' And then laughing, in perfect good-humour he added, 'Sir, I should have released the lady from any further trouble if it had not been for your remark; but you have reminded me that I want one of the dozen, and I must request Mrs. Cumberland to round up my number." When he saw the readiness and complacency with which my wife obeyed his call, he turned a kind and cheerful look upon her, and said, 'Madam, I must tell you for your comfort, you have escaped much better than a certain lady did awhile ago, upon whose patience I intruded greatly more than I have done on yours; but the lady asked me for no other purpose than to make a zany of me, and set me gabbling to a parcel of people I knew nothing of; so, madam, I had my revenge of her; for I swallowed five-and-twenty cups of her tea, and did not treat her with as many words.' I can only say my wife would have made tea for him as long as the New River could have supplied her with water.

"It was on such occasions he was to be seen in his happiest moments, when animated by the cheering attention of friends whom he liked, he would give full scope to those talents for narration in which I verily think he was unrivalled both in the brilliancy of his wit, the flow of his humour, and the energy of his language. Anecdotes of times past, scenes of his own life, and characters of humourists, enthusiasts, crack-brained projectors, and a variety of strange beings that he had chanced upon, when detailed by him at length, and garnished with those episodical remarks, sometimes comic, sometimes grave, which he would throw in with infinite fertility of fancy, were a treat, which though not always to be purchased by five-and-twenty cups of tea, I have often had the happiness to enjoy for less than half the number.

"He was easily led into topics; it was not easy to turn him from them; but who would wish it? If a man wanted to show himself off by getting up and riding upon him, he was sure to run restive and kick him off; you might as safely have backed Bucephalus, before Alexander had lunged him. Neither did he always like to be over-fondled: when a certain gentleman outacted his part in this way, he is said to have demanded of him, 'What provokes your risibility, sir? Have I said any thing that you understand? Then I ask pardon of the rest of the company.' But this is Henderson's anecdote of him, and I

won't swear he did not make it himself. The following apology, however, I myself drew from him; when speaking of his tour, I observed to him upon some passages as rather too sharp upon a country and people who had entertained him so handsomely: 'Do you think so, Cumbey?' he replied; 'then I give you leave to say, and you may quote me for it, that there are more gentlemen in Scotland than there are shoes.'

"But I don't relish these sayings, and I am to blame for retailing them: we can no more judge of men by these droppings from their lips, than we can guess at the contents of the river Nile by a pitcher of its water. If we were to estimate the wise men of Greece by Laertius's scraps of their sayings, what a parcel of old women should we account them to have been!

"When Mr. Colman, then manager of Covent-garden theatre, protested against Goldsmith's last comedy, when as yet he had not struck upon a name for it, Johnson stood forth in all his terrors as champion for the piece, and backed by us, his clients and retainers, demanded a fair trial. Colman again protested; but, with that salvo for his own reputation, liberally lent his stage to one of the most eccentric productions that ever found its way to it, and *She Stoops to Conquer* was put into rehearsal.

"We were not over-sanguine of success, but perfectly determined to struggle hard for our authour: we accordingly assembled our strength at the Shakspeare Tavern in a considerable body for an early dinner, where Samuel Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, and was the life and soul of the corps: the poet took post silently by his side, with the Burkes, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Fitzherbert[1], Caleb Whitefoord, and a phalanx of North-British pre-determined applauders, under the banner of Major Mills, all good men and true. Our illustrious friend was in inimitable glee, and poor Goldsmith that day took all his raillery as patiently and complacently as my friend Boswell would have done any day, or every day of his life. In the mean time we did not forget our duty, and though we had a better comedy going on, in which Johnson was chief actor, we betook ourselves in good time to our separate and allotted posts, and waited the awful drawing up of the curtain. As our stations were pre-concerted, so were our signals for plaudits arranged and determined upon in a manner that gave every one his cue where to look for them, and how to follow them up.

"We had amongst us a very worthy and efficient member, long since lost to his friends and the world at large, Adam Drummond, of amiable memory, who was gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious laugh, that ever echoed from the human lungs. The neighing of the horse of the son of Hystaspes was a whisper to it; the whole thunder of the theatre could not drown it. This kind and ingenuous friend fairly forewarned us that he knew no more when to give his fire than the cannon did that was planted on a battery. He desired therefore to have a flapper at his elbow, and I had the honour to be deputed to that office. I planted him in an upper box, pretty nearly over the stage, in full view of the pit and galleries, and perfectly well situated to give the echo all its play through the hollows and recesses of the theatre. The success of our manœuvres was complete. All eyes were upon Johnson, who sate in the front row of a side box, and when he laughed, every body thought themselves warranted to roar. In the mean time my friend Drummond followed signals with a rattle so irresistibly comic, that, when he had repeated it several times, the attention of the spectators was so engrossed by his person and performances, that the progress of the play seemed likely to become a secondary object, and I found it prudent to insinuate to him that he might halt his music without any prejudice to the authour; but, alas! it was now too late to rein him in; he had laughed upon my signal where he found no joke, and now unluckily he fancied that he found a joke in almost every thing that was said; so that nothing in nature could be more mal-a-propos than some of his bursts every now and then were. These were dangerous moments, for the pit began to take umbrage; but we carried our play through, and triumphed not only over Colman's judgment, but our own.

"I have heard Dr. Johnson relate with infinite humour the circumstance of his rescuing Goldsmith from a ridiculous dilemma by the purchase-money of his Vicar of Wakefield, which he sold on his behalf to Dodsley, and, as I think, for the sum of ten pounds only[2]. He had run up a debt with his landlady for board and lodging of some few pounds, and was as his wits' end how to wipe off the score and keep a roof over his head, except by closing with a very staggering proposal on her part, and taking his creditor to wife, whose charms were very far from alluring, whilst her demands were extremely urgent. In this crisis of his fate he was found by Johnson in the act of meditating on the melancholy alternative before him. He showed Johnson his manuscript of The Vicar of Wakefield, but seemed to be without any plan or even hope, of raising money upon the disposal of it: when Johnson cast his eye upon it, he discovered something that gave him hope, and immediately took it to Dodsley, who paid down the price above mentioned in ready money, and added an eventual condition upon its future sale. Johnson described the precautions he took in concealing the amount of the sum he had in hand, which he prudently administered to him by a guinea at a time. In the event he paid off the landlady's score, and redeemed the person of his friend from her embraces. Goldsmith had the joy of finding his ingenious work succeed beyond his hopes, and from that time began to place a confidence in the resources of his talents, which thenceforward enabled him to keep his station in society, and cultivate the friendship of many eminent persons, who, whilst they smiled at his eccentricities, esteemed him for his genius and good qualities.

1 [A mistake. "She Stoops to Conquer" was played on Monday the 15th March, 1773. Mr. Fitzherbert died early in 1772.—Ed.]

2 [Another mistake. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 187. But it would really seem as if Dr. Johnson himself sometimes varied in telling this story, for Hawkins, Mrs. Piozzi, Cumberland and Boswell, all have different versions. The least credible seems to be Cumberland's.—Ed.]

"Garrick was followed to the Abbey by a long extended train of friends, illustrious for their rank and genius. I saw old Samuel Johnson standing beside his grave, at the foot of Shakspear's monument, and bathed in tears. A few succeeding years laid him in earth; and though the marble shall preserve for ages the exact resemblance of his form and features, his own strong pen has pictured out a transcript of his mind, that shall outlive that and the very language which he laboured to perpetuate. Johnson's best days were dark; and only when his life was far in the decline, he enjoyed a gleam of fortune long withheld. Compare him with his countryman and contemporary last mentioned, and it will be one instance among many, that the man who only brings the muse's bantlings into the world has a better lot in it than he who has the credit of begetting them.

"Shortly after Garrick's death, Dr. Johnson was told in a large company, 'You are recent from your Lives of the Poets: why not add your friend Garrick to the number?' Johnson's answer was, 'I do not like to be officious; but if Mrs. Garrick will desire me to do it, I shall be very willing to pay that last tribute to the memory of the man I loved.' This sentiment was conveyed to Mrs. G. but no answer was ever received.

"The expanse of matter which Johnson had found room for in his intellectual storehouse, the correctness with which he had assorted it, and the readiness with which he could turn to any article that he wanted to make present use of, were the properties in him which I contemplated with the most admiration. Some have called him a savage; they were only so far right in the resemblance, as that, like the savage, he never came into suspicious company without his spear in his hand and his bow and quiver at his back.

* * * * *[1].

"As a poet, his translations of Juvenal gave him a name in the world, and gained him the applause of Pope. He was a writer of tragedy, but his Irene gives him no conspicuous rank in that department. As an essayist he merits more consideration: his Ramblers are in every body's hands; about them opinions vary, and I rather believe the style of these essays is not now considered as a good model; this he corrected in his more advanced age, as may be seen in his Lives of the Poets, where his diction, though occasionally elaborate and highly metaphorical, is not nearly so inflated and ponderous as in the Ramblers. He was an acute and able critic; the enthusiastic admirers of Milton and the friends of Gray will have something to complain of, but criticism is a task which no man executes to all men's satisfaction. His selection of a certain passage in the Mourning Bride of Congreve, which he extols so rapturously, is certainly a most unfortunate sample; but unless the oversights of a critic are less pardonable than those of other men, we may pass this over in a work of merit, which abounds in beauties far more prominent than its defects, and much more pleasing to contemplate. In works professedly of fancy he is not very copious; yet in his Rasselas we have much to admire, and enough to make us wish for more. It is the work of an illuminated mind, and offers many wise and deep reflections, clothed in beautiful and harmonious diction. We are not indeed familiar with such personages as Johnson had imagined for the characters of his fable, but if we are not exceedingly interested in their story, we are infinitely gratified with their conversation and remarks. In conclusion, Johnson's era was not wanting in men to be distinguished for their talents, yet if one was to be selected out as the first great literary character of the time, I believe all voices would concur in naming him. Let me here insert the following lines, descriptive of his character, though not long since written by me, and to be found in a public print:

"On Samuel Johnson.

'Herculean strength and a Stentorian voice,
Of wit a fund, of words a countless choice:
In learning rather various than profound,
In truth intrepid, in religion sound:
A trembling form and a distorted sight,
But firm in judgment and in genius bright;
In controversy seldom known to spare,
But humble as the publican in prayer;
To more than merited his kindness, kind,
And, though in manners harsh, of friendly mind;
Deep tinged with melancholy's blackest shade,
And, though prepared to die, of death afraid—
Such Johnson was; of him with justice vain,
When will this nation see his like again?"

Lord Chedworth, *in his Letters to the Rev. Mr. Crompton, (p. 222.) relates the following Anecdote.*

"When I was last in town I dined in company with the eminent Mr. C. [2], of whom I did not form a high opinion. He asserted that Dr. Johnson originally intended to abuse Paradise Lost, but being informed that the nation would not bear it, he produced the critique which now stands in the Life of Milton, and which he admitted to be excellent. I contended that Dr. Johnson had there expressed his real opinion, which no man was less afraid of delivering than Dr. Johnson, that the critique was written *con amore*, and that the work was praised with such a glow of fondness, and the grounds of that praise were so fully and satisfactorily unfolded, that it was impossible Dr. Johnson should not have felt the whole of the work, which he had so liberally and rationally commended. It came out afterwards that Dr. Johnson had disgusted Mr. C[oxe]. He had supped at Thrale's one night, when he sat near the upper end of the table, and Dr. Johnson near the lower end; and having related a long story which had very much delighted the company, in the pleasure resulting from which relation Dr. Johnson had not (from his deafness and the distance at which he sat) participated, Mrs. Thrale desired him to retell it to the Doctor. C[oxe] complied, and going down to the bottom of the table, bawled it over again in Dr. Johnson's ear: when he had finished, Johnson replied, 'So, sir, and this you relate as a good thing:' at which C[oxe] fired. He added to us, 'Now it was a good thing, *because* it was about the King of Po

[1] [Here followed the passage introduced *ante*, p. 429, &c.—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Crompton informs the Editor, that this was the Rev. William Coxe, who had recently published his travels.—Ed.]

land.' Of the value of the story, as he did not relate it, I cannot judge; but I am sure you will concur with me that it was not therefore necessarily a good thing because it was about a king. I think Johnson's behaviour was indefensibly rude, but from the sample I had of C[oxe]'s conversation, I am led to suspect that Johnson's censure was not unfounded."

ANECDOTES OF DR. JOHNSON.

BY MR. WICKINS, OF LICHFIELD.

From the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xciii. p. 389.)

[*Dr. Harwood informs the Editor, that Mr. Wickins was a respectable draper in Lichfield. It is very true that Dr. Johnson was accustomed to call on him during his visits to his native town. The garden attached to his house was ornamented in the manner he describes, and no doubt was ever entertained of the exactness of his anecdotes.*—ED.]

"Walking one day with him in my garden at Lichfield, we entered a small meandering shrubbery, whose 'Vista not lengthened to the sight,' gave promise of a larger extent. I observed that he might perhaps conceive that he was entering an extensive labyrinth, but that it would prove a deception, though I hoped not an unpardonable one. 'Sir,' said he, 'do n't tell me of deception; a lie, sir, is a lie, whether it be a lie to the eye or a lie to the ear.'

"Passing on we came to an urn which I had erected to the memory of a deceased friend. I asked him how he liked that urn—it was of the true Tuscan order. 'Sir,' said he, 'I hate them[1]; they *are* nothing, they *mean* nothing, convey no ideas but ideas of horror—would they were beaten to pieces to pave our streets!'

"We then came to a cold bath. I expatiated upon its salubrity. 'Sir,' said he, 'how do you do?' 'Very well, I thank you, Doctor.' 'Then, sir, let well enough alone, and be content. I hate immersion.' Truly, as Falstaff says, the Doctor 'would have a sort of alacrity at sinking[2].'

"Upon the margin stood the Venus de Medicis.

'So stands the statue that enchants the world.'

'Throw her,' said he, 'into the pond to hide her nakedness, and to cool her lasciviousness.'

"He then, with some difficulty, squeezed himself into a root house, when his eye caught the following lines from Parnell:

'Go search among your idle dreams,
Your busy, or your vain extremes,
And find a life of equal bliss,
Or own the next began in this.'

"The Doctor, however, not possessing any *silvan* ideas, seemed not to admit that heaven could be an Arcadia.

"I then observed him with Herculean strength tugging at a nail which he was endeavouring to extract from the bark of a plum tree; and having accomplished it, he exclaimed, 'There, sir, I have done *some* good to-day; the tree might have festered. I make a rule, sir, to do some good every day of my life.'

"Returning through the house, he stepped into a small study or book-room. The first book he laid his hands upon was Harwood's[3] 'Liberal Translation of the New Testament.' The passage which first caught his eye was from that sublime apostrophe in St. John, upon the raising of Lazarus, 'Jesus wept;' which Harwood had conceitedly rendered 'and Jesus, the Saviour of the world, burst into a flood of tears.' He contemptuously threw the book aside, exclaiming, 'Puppy!' I then showed him Sterne's Sermons. 'Sir,' said he, 'do you ever read any others?' 'Yes, Doctor; I read Sherlock, Tillotson, Beveridge, and others.' 'Ay, sir, *there* you drink the cup of salvation to the bottom; here you have merely the froth from the surface.' St. John, xi. 35.

"Within this room stood the Shakspearean mulberry vase, a pedestal given by me to Mr. Garrick, and which was recently sold, with Mr. Garrick's gems, at Mrs. Garrick's sale at Hampton. The Doctor read the inscription:

'SACRED TO SHAKSPEARE,
And in honour of
DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.—
The Ornament—the Reformer
Of the British Stage.'

"'Ay, sir; Davy, Davy loves flattery, but here indeed you have flattered him as he deserves, paying a just tribute to his merit.'"

"In Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson," says another correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "he[4] relates, that Garrick being asked by Johnson what people said of his Dictionary, told him, that among other animadversions, it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of such a work, and mentioned Richardson. 'Nay,' said Johnson, 'I have done worse than that; I have cited thee, David.' This anecdote induced me to turn over the leaves of his Dictionary, that I might note the citations from each writer. Two only I found from Garrick, viz. G. W. L. Gent. Mag. v xciv. p. 386.

'Our bard's a *fabulist*, and deals in fiction.'
'I know you all expect, from seeing me,
Some formal lecture, spoke with *prudish* face.'

The quotations from Richardson are at least eighty in number; almost all of which are from his Clarissa."

"Dr. Brocklesby[5], a few days before the death of Dr. Johnson, found on the table Dr. Kippis's account of the Disputes of the Royal Society. Dr. J. inquired of his physician if he had read it, who answered in the negative. 'You are at no loss, sir. It is poor Green, v. xcii. p. 592.

1 [See a similar sentiment on the occasion of Mr Mydleton's urn to himself, *ante*, p. 113.—ED.]

2 [A mistake; he was a good swimmer. See *ante*, p. 94.—ED.]

3 [The reader must bear in mind that this Doctor Edward Harwood, the same mentioned by Mr. Cradock and who has been dead many years, is not to be confounded with Dr. Thomas Harwood, of Lichfield, who is now alive, and whose information is quoted at the head of this article.—ED.]

4 [It was Mr. Langton who related it, on the authority of J. G. Cooper. See *ante*, p. 243.—ED.]

5 [This and the four following anecdotes are told by Mr. Green of Litchfield. See *ante*, p. 44.—ED.]

stuff, indeed, a sad unscholar-like performance. I could not have believed that that man would have written so ill.'

"He then said, 'Dr. Brocklesby, do you think there is a possibility that I should recover?' 'What nature may do I cannot say, but art has done her utmost.' 'How long do you think I may live?' 'I cannot precisely say, perhaps a few days.' 'That is honest and friendly. Do you think I can live a week?' 'No.' 'Do you think I can live six days?' 'Perhaps so.' 'Then I will take no more physic; and now you will say I have killed myself [1].'

"Being desired to call in Dr. Warren, he said, 'they might call in any body they pleased;' and Warren was called. At his going away, 'You have come in,' said Dr. Johnson, 'at the eleventh hour; but you shall be paid the same with your fellow-labourers. Francis, put into Dr. Warren's coach a copy of the English Poets.'

"Some years before, some person in a company at Salisbury, of which Dr. Johnson was one, vouched for the company, that there was nobody in it afraid of death.—'Speak for yourself, sir; for indeed I am.' 'I did not say of *dying*,' replied the other; 'but of death, meaning its consequences.' 'And so I mean,' rejoined the Doctor; 'I am very seriously afraid of the consequences.'"

Gent. Mag. v. lxi. p. 500.

"Mr. Nichols was present when Mr. Henderson, the actor, had the honour of being introduced to Dr. Johnson, and was highly entertained by the interview. The conversation turning on the merits of a certain dramatic writer, Johnson said, 'I never did the man an injury; but he would persist in reading his tragedy to me.' When Henderson was taking his leave, he invited him with much earnestness to come again frequently. 'The oftener you call on me, sir, the more welcome will your visits be.'"

"A literary lady, expressing to Dr. Johnson her approbation of his Dictionary, and, in particular, her satisfaction at his not having admitted into it any *improper words*—'No, madam,' replied he; 'I hope I have not daubed my fingers. I find, however, that you have been looking for them.'

"Boswell, in his minute and entertaining account of Johnson's Life, has omitted to mention, that, when the Doctor first came to London with his pupil, Garrick, they borrowed five pounds on their joint note of Mr. Wilcocks, the bookseller in the Strand."

"The mention of Johnson's name," writes Sir Joseph Mawbey, "reminds me of an anecdote of him which I had from Garrick, with whom I belonged to a summer club for many years (till he died), first held at the assembly-house at Walton Bridge, and afterwards at Hampton. I believe Mr. Boswell does not mention this anecdote in his account of Johnson.

"Whilst Johnson was sitting in one of the coffee-houses at Oxford, about the time when he had a doctor's degree conferred on him by the University, some young men approached him with a view to entertainment. They knew the subject of Scotch poetry and Scotch literature would call him forth. They talked of Ossian, and Home's tragedy of Douglas; and one of them repeated some verses from the latter; after which he called out, 'There's imagery for you, Dr. Johnson! There 's description! Did you ever know any man write like that?' Johnson replied, with that tone of voice and motion of head and body for which he was remarkable, and which Garrick used to mimick inimitably, 'Yes, sir, many a man, many a woman, and many a child [2].'"

Life of Golds.

"The first visit Goldsmith ever received from Dr. Johnson was on May 31, 1761 [3]; when he gave an invitation to him and much other company, many of them literary men, to a supper in his lodgings. Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore, one of the company then invited, being intimate with the great lexicographer, was desired to call upon him and take him with him. As they went together, the former was much struck with the studied neatness of Johnson's dress. He had on a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and every thing about him so perfectly dissimilar from his usual habits and appearance, that his companion could not help inquiring the cause of this singular transformation. 'Why, sir,' said Johnson, 'I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example.'"

Rev. Mr. Parker.

"Dr. Johnson's friendship for Mrs. Elizabeth Aston [4] commenced at the palace in Lichfield, the residence of Mr. Walmesley: with Mrs. Gastrel he became acquainted in London, at the house of her brother-in-law, Mr. Hervey. During the Doctor's annual visits to his daughter-in-law, Lucy Porter, he spent much of his time at Stow-hill, where Mrs. Gastrel and Mrs. Elizabeth Aston resided. They were the daughters of Sir Thomas Aston, of Aston-hall in Cheshire, of whom it is said, that being applied to for some account of his family, to illustrate the History of Cheshire, he replied, 'that the title and

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1 [See *ante*, page 422.—Ed.]

2 [I have quoted this anecdote solely with the view of showing to how little credit hearsay anecdotes are in general entitled. Here is a story published by Sir Joseph Mawbey, a member of the house of commons, and a person every way worthy of credit, who says he had it from Garrick. Now mark—Johnson's "visit to Oxford about the time of his doctor's degree" was in 1754, the first time he had been there since he left the university; but Douglas was not acted till 1756, and Ossian not published till 1760. Every one knows that Dr. Johnson said of Ossian that "many men, many women, and many children might have written it." All therefore that is new in Sir Joseph Mawbey's story is false. Mr. Tyers related the same story, *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1785, p. 86; but did not lay the scene with such minute inaccuracy as Sir Joseph did.—Ed.]

3 [It was also in this year, 1761, that Goldsmith published the "Vicar of Wakefield." (See *ante*, vol. i p. 188. *n.*) This leads the Editor to observe a more serious inaccuracy of Mrs. Piozzi than Mr. Boswell notices, when she says Johnson left her table to go and sell the "Vicar of Wakefield" for Goldsmith. Now Dr. Johnson was not acquainted with the Thrales till 1765, four years after the book had been published.—Ed.]

4 [The following anecdotes are told by Mr. Parker from the relation of Mrs. Aston and her sister.—Ed.]

estate had descended from father to son for thirty generations, and that he believed they were neither much richer nor much poorer than they were at first.'

"He used to say of Dr. Hunter, master of the free grammar school, Lichfield, that he never taught a boy in his life—he whipped and they learned. Hunter was a pompous man, and never entered the school without his gown and cassock, and his wig full-dressed. He had a remarkably stern look, and Dr. Johnson said he could tremble at the sight of Miss Seward, she was so like her grandfather.

"Mrs. Gastrel was on a visit at Mr. Hervey's, in London, at the time that Johnson was writing the Rambler; the printer's boy would often come after him to their house, and wait while he wrote off a paper for the press in a room full of company. A great portion of the Lives of the Poets was written at Stow-hill; he had a table by one of the windows, which was frequently surrounded by five or six ladies engaged in work or conversation. Mrs. Gastrel had a very valuable edition of Bailey's Dictionary, to which he often referred. She told him that Miss Seward said that he had made poetry of no value by his criticism. 'Why, my dear lady,' replied he, 'if silver is dirty, it is not the less valuable for a good scouring.'

"A large party had one day been invited to meet the Doctor at Stow-hill; the dinner waited far beyond the usual hour, and the company were about to sit down, when Johnson appeared at the great gate; he stood for some time in deep contemplation, and at length began to climb it, and, having succeeded in clearing it, advanced with hasty strides towards the house. On his arrival Mrs. Gastrel asked him, 'If he had forgotten that there was a small gate for foot passengers by the side of the carriage entrance.' 'No, my dear lady, by no means,' replied the Doctor; 'but I had a mind to try whether I could climb a gate now as I used to do when I was a lad.'

"One day Mrs. Gastrel set a little girl to repeat to him Cato's soliloquy, which she went through very correctly. The Doctor, after a pause, asked the child 'What was to bring Cato to an end?' She said it was a knife. 'No my dear, it was not so.' 'My aunt Polly said it was a knife.' 'Why, aunt Polly's knife *may do*, but it was a *dagger*, my dear.' He then asked her the meaning of 'bane and antidote,' which she was unable to give. Mrs. Gastrel said, 'You cannot expect so young a child to know the meaning of such words.' He then said, 'My dear, how many pence are there in *sixpence?*' 'I cannot tell, sir,' was the half terrified reply. On this, addressing himself to Mrs. Gastrel, he said, 'Now, my dear lady, can any thing be more ridiculous than to teach a child Cato's soliloquy, who does not know how many pence there are in sixpence?'

"The ladies at Stow-hill would occasionally rebuke Dr. Johnson for the indiscriminate exercise of his charity to all who applied for it. 'There was that woman,' said one of them, 'to whom you yesterday gave half-a-crown, why she was at church to-day in long sleeves and ribbons,' 'Well, my dear,' replied Johnson, 'and if it gave the woman pleasure, why should she not wear them?'

"He had long promised to write Mr. Walmesley's epitaph, and Mrs. W. waited for it, in order to erect a monument to her husband's memory; procrastination, however, one of the Doctor's few failings, prevented its being finished; he was engaged upon it in his last illness, and when the physicians, at his own request, informed him of his danger, he pushed the papers from before him, saying, 'It was too late to write the epitaph of another when he should so soon want one himself.'"

"The late Mr. Crauford, of Hyde-Park-corner[1], being engaged to dinner, where Dr. Johnson was to be, resolved to pay his court to him, and having heard that he preferred Donne's Satires to Pope's version of them, said, 'Do you know, Dr. Johnson, that I like Dr. Donne's original satires better than Pope's.' Johnson said, 'Well, sir, I can't help that.' ED.

"Miss Johnson, one of Sir Joshua's nieces (afterwards Mrs. Deane), was dining one day at her uncle's with Dr. Johnson and a large party: the conversation happening to turn on music, Johnson spoke very contemptuously of that art, and added, 'that no man of talent, or whose mind was capable of better things, ever would or could devote his time and attention to so idle and frivolous a pursuit.' The young lady, who was very fond of music, whispered her next neighbour, 'I wonder what Dr. Johnson thinks of King David.' Johnson overheard her, and, with great good humour and complacency, said, 'Madam, I thank you; I stand rebuked before you, and promise that, on one subject at least, you shall never hear me talk nonsense again.'

"The honours of the University of Cambridge were once[2] performed, to Dr. Johnson, by Dr. Watson, the late Bishop of Llandaff, and then Professor of Chemistry, &c. After having spent the morning in seeing all that was worthy of notice, the sage dined at his conductor's table, which was surrounded by various persons, all anxious to see so remarkable a character, but the moment was not favourable; he had been wearied by his previous exertions, and would not talk. After the party had dispersed he said, 'I was tired, and would not take the trouble, or I could have set them right upon several subjects, sir; for instance, the gentleman who said he could not imagine how any pleasure could be derived from hunting, the reason is, because man feels his own vacuity less in action than when at rest.'

"Mr. Williams, the Rector of Wellesbourne, in Warwickshire, mentioned having once, when a young man, performed a stage-coach journey with Dr. Johnson, who took his place in the vehicle, provided with a little book, which his companion soon discovered to be Lucian; he occasionally threw it aside, if struck by any remark made by his fellow travellers, and poured forth his knowledge and eloquence in a full stream, to the delight and astonishment of his auditors. Accidentally the first subject which attracted him was the digestive faculties of dogs, from whence he

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1 [Commonly called Fish Crauford.—ED.]

2 [Dr. Watson was a fellow of Trinity: see *ante*, vol. i. p. 216, an account of this visit to Cambridge, which occurred in Feb. 1765.—ED.]

branched off as to the powers of digestion in various species of animals, discovering such stores of information, that this particular point might have been supposed to have formed his especial study, and so it was with every other subject started: the strength of his memory was not less astonishing than his eloquence; he quoted from various authours, either in support of his own argument or to confute those of his companions, as readily and, apparently, as accurately as if the works had been in his hands. The coach halted, as usual, for dinner, which seemed to be a deeply interesting business to Johnson, who vehemently attacked a dish of stewed carp, using his fingers only in feeding himself [1].

"Bishop Percy was at one time on a very intimate footing with Dr. Johnson, and the Doctor one day took Percy's [2] little daughter upon his knee, and asked her what she thought of 'Pilgrim's Progress?' The child answered that she had not read it. 'No,' replied the Doctor, 'then I would not give one farthing for you,' and he set her down and took no further notice of her.

Mrs. Rose [3]. "Dr. Mudge used to relate, as a proof of Dr. Johnson's quick discernment into character [4]:—When he was on a visit to Dr. Mudge at Plymouth, the inhabitants of the Dock (now Devonport) were very desirous of their town being supplied with water, to effect which it was necessary to obtain the consent of the corporation of Plymouth; this was obstinately refused, the Dock being considered as an upstart. And a rival, Alderman Tolcher, who took a very strong part, called one morning, and immediately opened on the subject to Dr. Johnson, who appeared to give great attention, and, when the alderman had ceased speaking, replied, 'You are perfectly right, sir; I would let the rogues die of thirst, for I hate a Docker from my heart.' The old man went away quite delighted, and told all his acquaintances how completely 'the great Dr. Johnson was on *his* side of the question.'

"It was after the publication of the Lives of the Poets that Dr. Farr, being engaged to dine with Sir Joshua Reynolds, mentioned, on coming in, that, in his way, he had seen a caricature, which he thought clever, of the nine muses flogging Dr. Johnson round Parnassus. The admirers of Gray and others, who thought their favourites hardly treated in the Lives, were laughing at Dr. Farr's account of the print, when Dr. Johnson was himself announced: Dr. Farr being the only stranger, Sir Joshua introduced him, and, to Farr's infinite embarrassment, repeated what he had just been telling them. Johnson was not at all surly on the occasion, but said, turning to Dr. Farr, 'Sir, I am very glad to hear this. I hope the day will never arrive when I shall neither be the object of calumny or ridicule, for then I shall be neglected and forgotten [5].'

"It was near the close of his life that two young ladies, who were warm admirers of his works, but had never seen himself, went to Bolt-court, and, asking if he was at home, were shown up stairs, where he was writing. He laid down his pen on their entrance, and, as they stood before him, one of the females repeated a speech of some length, previously prepared for the occasion. It was an enthusiastic effusion, which, when the speaker had finished, she panted for her idol's reply. What was her mortification when all he said was 'Fiddle-de-dee, my dear.'

"Much pains were taken by Mr. Hayley's friends to prevail on Dr. Johnson to read 'The Triumphs of Temper,' when it was in its zenith; at last he consented, but never got beyond the two first pages, of which he uttered a few words of contempt that I have now forgotten. They were, however, carried to the authour, who revenged himself by pourtraying Johnson as *Rumble* in his comedy of 'The Mausoleum,' and subsequently he published, without his name, a 'Dialogue in the Shades between Lord Chesterfield and Dr. Johnson,' more distinguished for malignity than wit. Being anonymous, and possessing very little merit, it fell still-born from the press [6].

"Dr. Johnson sent his 'Life of Lord Lyttleton' in MSS to Mrs. Montague, who was much dissatisfied with it, and thought her friend every way underrated, but the Doctor made no alteration. When he subsequently made one of a party at Mrs. Montague's, he addressed his hostess two or three times after dinner, with a view to engage her in conversation: receiving only cold and brief answers, he said, in a low voice, to General Paoli, who sat next him, and who told me the story, 'You see, sir, I am no longer the man for Mrs. Montague.'

"Mrs. Piozzi related to me, that when Dr. Johnson one day observed, that poets in general preferred some one couplet they had written to any other, she replied, that she did not suppose he had a favourite; he told her she was mistaken—he thought his best lines were:—

'The encumber'd oar scarce leaves the hostile coast,
Through purple billows and a floating host.[7]'"

Pa "Dr. Johnson [8], in his conversation with Dr. Parr, repeatedly and earnestly avowed

1 [Mr. Boswell, *ante*, p. 381, mentions another instance, in which Dr. Johnson surprised his accidental companions in a stage-coach with the force of his conversation and the goodness of his appetite.—Ed.]

2 [Afterwards Mrs. Isted, of Ecton, Northamptonshire.—Ed.]

3 [Mrs. Rose, who has obligingly communicated these anecdotes, is the daughter of Dr. Farr, of Plymouth, and the daughter-in-law of Dr. Johnson's old friend, D. Rose, of Chiswick.—Ed.]

4 [This story is told by Mr. Boswell, and commented upon by Mr. Blakeway (*ante*, vol. i. p. 164), as if Dr. Johnson had *seriously* entered into the spirit of the contest; whereas Dr. Mudge, more naturally, represents him as *flattering*, with an ironical vehemence, the prejudices of the worthy alderman, who is known, from other circumstances, to have been of a very *zealous* disposition.—Ed.]

5 [This was his usual declaration on all such occasions. If Johnson had been an amateur authour, abuse and even criticism would no doubt have given him pain, but, to an authour by profession, and one who, for so many years, had lived by his pen, the greatest misfortune would be neglect; for his daily bread depended on the sensation his works might create (see *ante*, p. 204). This observation will be found applicable to many other cases.—Ed.]

6 [See *ante*, p. 402-3, where it will be seen that, besides the character of *Rumble* and the *Dead* Dialogue, Hayley vented his spleen in a correspondence with Miss Seward, which that lady, or some of her confidants, chose to publish, and which, instead of affecting the reputation of Dr. Johnson, only cover the names of the two writers with indelible ridicule.—Ed.]

7 [These lines are in the *Vanity of Human Wishes* line 192.—Ed.]

8 [These three anecdotes, or rather memoranda of Dr Parr's, were communicated by his biographer Dr John stone, of Birmingham.—Ed.]

his opinion, that accents ought not to be omitted by any editor of Greek authours, or any modern writers of Greek verse, or Greek prose.

"Johnson said Gray 'walked on tiptoe.' The same thought is in Quintilian and in Seneca, 'quo quisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis attolere et dilitare conatur: ut *statura breves in digitos* eriguntur, et plura infirmi mirantur.'—Quintilian, by Rollin, Lib. ii. cap. 3. Seneca also says, 'in edito stat admirabilis, celsus, magnitudinis veræ. Non exsurgit in plantas, nec summis ambulat digitis, eorum more, qui mendacio staturam adjuvant, longioresque quam sunt, videri volunt: contentus est magnitudine suâ.'—Epist. iii.

"'A wit among lords, and a lord among wits,' said Johnson of Lord Chesterfield. 'Sed tam contumeliosos in se ridet invicem eloquentia: et qui stultis eruditi videri volunt, stulti eruditis videntur.'—Quintilian, by Rollin, pa. 409, Lib. x. cap. vii. See also Pope's Dunciad:

'A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits.'"

Mr. Barclay.

"Mr. Barclay[1], from his connexion with Mr. Thrale, had several opportunities of meeting and conversing with Dr. Johnson. On his becoming a partner in the brewery, Johnson advised him not to allow his commercial pursuits to divert his attention from his studies. 'A mere literary man,' said the Doctor, 'is a *dull* man; a man, who is solely a man of business, is a *selfish* man; but when literature and commerce are united, they make a *respectable* man.'

"Mr. Barclay saw Johnson ten days before he died, when the latter observed, 'That they should never meet more. Have you any objection to receive an old man's blessing?' Mr. Barclay knelt down, and Johnson gave him his blessing with great fervency.

"Mr. Barclay had never observed any rudeness or violence on the part of Johnson.

"He has seen Boswell lay down his knife and fork, and take out his tablets, in order to register a good anecdote.

"When Johnson proceeded to the dining-room, one of Mr. Thrale's servants handed him a wig of a smarter description than the one he wore in the morning; the exchange took place in the hall, or passage. Johnson, like many other men, was always in much better humour *after* dinner than *before*[2]."

Sir J. Hawk. Life, p. 51.

"With all that asperity of manners with which he has been charged, and which kept at a distance many who, to my knowledge, would have been glad of an intimacy with him, he possessed the affections of pity and compassion in a most eminent degree. In a mixed company, of which I was one, the conversation turned on the pestilence which raged in London in the year 1665, and gave occasion to Johnson to speak of Dr. Nathaniel Hodges, who, in the height of that calamity, continued in the city, and was almost the only one of his profession that had the courage to oppose the endeavours of his art to the spreading of the contagion. It was the hard fate of this person, a short time after, to die a prisoner for debt in Ludgate. Johnson related this circumstance to us, with the tears ready to start from his eyes, and with great energy said, 'Such a man would not have been suffered to perish in these times.'"

"On Johnson's death, Mr. Langton said to Sir John Hawkins, 'We shall now know whether he has or has not assisted Sir Joshua in his Discourses;' but Johnson had assured Sir John that his assistance had never exceeded the substitution of a word or two, in preference to what Sir Joshua had written. Miss Hawk Mem.

"What the economy of Dr. Johnson's house may have been under his wife's administration I cannot tell, but under Miss Williams's management, and, indeed, afterwards, when he was overcome at the misery of those around him, it always deceived my expectation, as far as the condition of the apartment into which I was admitted could enable me to judge. It was not, indeed, his study; amongst his books he probably might bring Magliabeechi to recollection, but I saw him only in the decent drawing-room of a house, not inferior to others on the same local situation, and with stout old-fashioned mahogany table and chairs. He was a liberal customer to his tailor, and I can remember that his linen was often a strong contrast to the colour of his hands.

"It may be said of Johnson, that he had a *peculiar* feeling of regard towards his many and various friends, and that he was to each what might be called the *indenture*, or counter-part of what they were to him."

"Dr. Johnson[3] confessed himself to have been sometimes in the power of bailiffs. Richardson, the authour of Clarissa, was his constant friend on such occasions. 'I remember writing to him,' said Johnson, 'from a sponging house; and was so sure of my deliverance through his kindness and liberality, that, before his reply was brought, I knew I could afford to joke with the rascal who had me in custody, and did so, over a pint of adulterated wine, for which, at that instant, I had no money to pay.' Steevens London Mag. vol. lv. p. 253.

"It has been observed that Johnson had lost the sight of one of his eyes. Mr. Ellis, an ancient gentleman now living (authour of a very happy burlesque translation of the thirteenth book added to the Æneid by Maffæe Vegio) was in the same condition; but, some years after, while he was at Margate, the sight of his eye unexpectedly returned, and that of its fellow became suddenly extinguished. Concerning the particulars of this singular but authenticated event, Dr. Johnson was

1 [The late Robert Barclay, Esq. of Bury Hill, near Dorking. This benevolent and excellent man (from whom Mr. Markland derived these memoranda in 1824, died in 1831, at an advanced age.—Ed.]

2 [See *ante*, p. 182.—Ed.]

3 [The following anecdotes, published by Mr. Steevens, from day to day in the *St. James's Chronicle*, and afterwards collected in the *London Magazine*, escaped the Editor's notice, till it was too late to introduce them into the text; but as they tell some new facts, and relate others that have been already told in a new manner, it has been thought right to preserve them. The first of these anecdotes confirms the justice which the Editor had already endeavoured to do to the memory of Richardson against the sneer of Murphy. *Ante*, v. i. p 131. Ed.]

studiously inquisitive, and not with reference to his own case. Though he never made use of glasses to assist his sight, he said he could recollect no production of art to which man has superior obligations. He mentioned the name of the original inventor[1] of spectacles with reverence, and expressed his wonder that not an individual, out of the multitudes who had profited by them, had, through gratitude, written the life of so great a benefactor to society.

"The Doctor is known to have been, like Savage, a very late visiter; yet at whatever hour he returned, he never went to bed without a previous call on Mrs. Williams, the blind lady who for so many years had found protection under his roof. Coming home one morning between four and five, he said to her, 'Take notice, madam, that for once I am here before others are asleep. As I turned into the court, I ran against a knot of bricklayers.' 'You forget, my dear sir,' replied she, 'that these people have all been a-bed, and are now preparing for their day's work.' 'Is it so, then, madam? I confess that circumstance had escaped me.'

"'I have been told, Dr. Johnson,' says a friend, 'that your translation of Pope's Messiah was made either as a common exercise or as an imposition for some negligence you had been guilty of at college.' 'No, sir,' replied the Doctor. 'At Pembroke the former were always in prose, and to the latter I would not have submitted. I wrote it rather to show the tutors what I could do, than what I was willing should be done. It answered my purpose; for it convinced those who were well enough inclined to punish me, that I could wield a scholar's weapon, as often as I was menaced with arbitrary inflictions. Before the frequency of personal satire had weakened its effect, the petty tyrants of colleges stood in awe of a pointed remark, or a vindictive epigram. But since every man in his turn has been wounded, no man is ashamed of a scar.'

"When Dr. Percy first published his collection of ancient English ballads, perhaps he was too lavish in commendation of the beautiful simplicity and poetic merit he supposed himself to discover in them. This circumstance provoked Johnson to observe one evening at Miss Reynolds's tea-table, that he could rhyme as well, and as elegantly, in common narrative and conversation. For instance, says he,

'As with my hat upon my head
I walk'd along the Strand,
I there did meet another man
With his hat in his hand.[2]

'Or, to render such poetry subservient to my own immediate use,

'I therefore pray thee, Renny dear,
That thou wilt give to me,
With cream and sugar soften'd well,
Another dish of tea.

'Nor fear that I, my gentle maid,
Shall long detain the cup,
When once unto the bottom I
Have drank the liquor up.

'Yet hear, alas! this mournful truth,
Nor hear it with a frown:—
Thou canst not make the tea so fast
As I can gulp it down.'

And thus he proceeded through several more stanzas, till the reverend critic cried out for quarter. Such ridicule, however, was unmerited.

"'Night,' Mr. Tyers has told us, 'was Johnson's time for composition.' But this assertion, if meant for a general one, can be refuted by living evidence. Almost the whole preface to Shakspeare, and no inconsiderable part of the Lives of the Poets, were composed by daylight, and in a room where a friend[3] was employed by him in other investigations. His studies were only continued through the night when the day had been pre-occupied, or proved too short for his undertakings. Respecting the fertility of his genius, the resources of his learning, and the accuracy of his judgment, the darkness and the light were both alike.

"'Mrs. Thrale,' Mr. Tyers also reports, 'knew how to spread a table with the utmost plenty and elegance;' but all who are acquainted with this lady's domestic history must know, that in the present instance Mr. Tyers' praise of her is unluckily bestowed. Her husband superintended every dinner set before his guests. After his death she confessed her total ignorance in culinary arrangements. Poor Thrale studied an art of which he loved the produce, and to which he expired a martyr. Johnson repeatedly, and with all the warmth of earnest friendship, assured him he was *nimis edax rerum*, and that such unlimited indulgence of his palate would precipitate his end.

"When in his latter years he was reminded of his forcible sarcasm against Bolingbroke and Mallet (v. i. p. 115), the Doctor exclaimed, 'Did I really say so?' 'Yes, sir.' He replied, 'I am heartily glad of it.'

"'You knew Mr. Capel[4], Dr. Johnson?' 'Yes, sir; I have seen him at Garrick's.' 'And what think you of his abilities?' 'They are just sufficient, sir, to enable him to select the black hairs from the white ones, for the use of the perriwig makers. Were he and I to count the grains in a bushel of wheat for a wager, he would certainly prove the winner.'

"When one Collins, a sleep-compelling divine of Hertfordshire, with the assistance of counsellor Hardinge[5], published a heavy half-crown pamphlet against Mr. Steevens, Garrick asked the Doctor what he thought of this attack on his coadjutor. 'I regard Collins's performance,' replied Johnson, 'as a great gun without powder or shot.' When the same Collins afterwards appeared as editor of Capel's posthumous notes on Shakspeare, with a preface of his own, containing the following words—'A sudden and most severe stroke of affliction has left my mind too much distracted to be capable of engaging in such a task (that of a further attack on Mr. Steevens), though I am prompted to it by inclination as well as duty,' the Doctor asked

1 The inventor of spectacles is said to have been a monk at Pisa, who lived at the end of the thirteenth century, and whose name was Spina.—Ed. *of Lond. Mag.*

2 [See *ante*, p. 164, where this anecdote is told in the vague manner and on the imperfect authority of Mr. Cradock. To have deliberately composed and circulated a parody on his friend's poem would have been a very different thing from a sportive *improvisation* over the tea-table.—Ed.]

3 [Mr. Steevens himself.—Ed.]

4 [The annotator of Shakspeare.—Ed.]

5 [George Hardinge.—Ed.]

to what misfortune the foregoing words referred. Being told that the critic had lost his wife, Johnson added, 'I believe that the loss of teeth may deprave the voice of a singer, and that lameness will impede the motions of a dancing master, but I have not yet been taught to regard the death of a wife as the grave of literary exertions. When my dear Mrs. Johnson expired, I sought relief in my studies, and strove to lose the recollection of her in the toils of literature. Perhaps, however, I wrong the feelings of this poor fellow. His wife might have held the pen in his name. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* Nay, I think I observe, throughout his two pieces, a woman's irritability, with a woman's impotence of revenge.' Yet such were Johnson's tender remembrances of his own wife, that after her death, though he had a whole house at command, he would study nowhere but in a garret. Being asked the reason why he chose a situation so incommodious, he answered, 'Because in that room only I never saw Mrs. Johnson.'

"'Though you brought a tragedy, sir, to Drury-lane, and at one time were so intimate with Garrick, you never appeared to have much theatrical acquaintance.' 'Sir, while I had, in common with other dramatic authours, the liberty of the scenes, without considering my admission behind them as a favour, I was frequently at the theatre. At that period all the wenches knew me, and dropped me a curtsy as they passed on to the stage. But since poor Goldsmith's last comedy [1], I scarce recollect having seen the inside of a playhouse. To speak the truth, there is small encouragement there for a man whose sight and hearing are become so imperfect as mine. I may add, that, Garrick and Henderson excepted, I never met with a performer who had studied his art, or could give an intelligible reason for what he did [2].'

"On the night before the publication of the first edition of his Shakspeare, he supped with some friends in the Temple, who kept him up, 'nothing loth,' till past five the next morning. Much pleasantry was passing on the subject of commentatorship, when, all on a sudden, the Doctor, looking at his watch, cried out, "This is sport to you, gentlemen; but you do not consider there are at most only four hours between me and criticism.'

"Once, and but once, he is known to have had too much wine; a circumstance which he himself discovered, on finding one of his sesquipedalian words hang fire. He then started up, and gravely observed, 'I think it time we should go to bed.'

"If 'a little learning is a dangerous thing' on any speculative subject, it is eminently more so in the practical science of physic. Johnson was too frequently his own doctor. In October, just before he came to London, he had taken an unusual dose of squills, but without effect. He swallowed the same quantity on his arrival here, and it produced a most violent operation. He did not, as he afterwards confessed, reflect on the difference between the perished and inefficacious vegetable he found in the country, and the fresh and potent one of the same kind he was sure to meet with in town. 'You find me at present,' says he, 'suffering from a prescription of my own. When I am recovered from its consequences, and not till then, I shall know the true state of my natural malady.' From this period, he took no medicine without the approbation of Heberden. What follows is known by all, and by all lamented—ere now perhaps—even by the prebends of Westminster [3].

"Johnson asked one of his executors, a few days before his death, 'Where do you intend to bury me?' He answered, 'In Westminster Abbey.' 'Then,' continued he, 'if my friends think it worth while to give me a stone, let it be placed over me so as to protect my body.'

"On the Monday after his decease he was interred in Westminster Abbey. The corpse was brought from his house in Bolt-court to the hearse, preceded by the Rev. Mr. Butt and the Rev. Mr. Strahan, about twelve o'clock. The following was the order of the procession:

"Hearse and six.

"The executors, viz. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and William Scott, LL. D. in a coach and four.

"Eight coaches and four, containing the Literary Club, and others of the Doctor's friends, invited by the executors; viz. Dr. Burney, Mr. Malone, Mr. Steevens, the Rev. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Ryland, Mr. Hoole, Dr. Brocklesby, Mr. Cruikshanks, Mr. Nichols, Mr. Low, Mr. Paradise, General Paoli, Count Zenobia, Dr. Butter, Mr. Holder, Mr. Seward, Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Sastres, Mr. Des Moulins, the Rev. Mr. Butt, Dr. Horsley, Dr. Farmer, Dr. Wright; to whom may be added, Mr. Cooke (who was introduced by Dr. Brocklesby), and the Doctor's faithful servant, Francis Barber.

"Two coaches and four, containing the pall-bearers, viz. Mr. Burke, Mr. Wyndham, Sir Charles Bunbury, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Colman, and Mr. Langton.

"After these followed two mourning coaches and four, filled with gentlemen, who, as volunteers, honoured themselves by attending this funeral. These were the Rev. Mr. Hoole, the Rev. Mr. East, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Mickle, Mr. Sharp, Mr. C. Burney, and Mr. G. Nichol.

"Thirteen gentlemen's carriages closed the procession, which reached the Abbey a little before one.

"The corpse was met at the west door by the prebendaries in residence, to the number of six, in their surplices and doctor's hoods; and the officers of the church, and attendants on the funeral, were then marshalled in the following order:

"Two vergers.
The Rev. Mr. Strahan.
The Rev. Mr. Butt.
THE BODY.
Sir Joshua Reynolds, as chief mourner and an executor.
Sir John Hawkins and Dr. Scott, as executors.
The rest two and two.

1 [See *ante*, p. 499.—ED.]

2 [This was probably before his acquaintance with Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, which took place only the year before his death, *ante*, p. 359.—ED

3 [This sarcasm against the *prebendaries* of Westminster, and particularly against Johnson's friend Dr. Taylor, who was one of them, will be explained presently.—ED.]

"The body then proceeded to the south cross, and, in view of the three executors, was deposited by the side of Mr. Garrick, with the feet opposite to the monument of Shakspeare.

"The Reverend Dr. Taylor performed the burial service, attended by some gentlemen of the Abbey; but it must be regretted by all who continue to reverence the hierarchy, that the cathedral service was withheld [1] from its invariable friend; and the omission was truly offensive to the audience at large."

"When Mrs. Thrale was going to visit some country friends, Dr. Johnson gave her the following excellent advice: 'Do not make them speeches. Unusual compliments, to which there is no stated and prescriptive answer, embarrass the feeble, who know not what to say, and disgust the wise, who, knowing them to be false, suspect them to be hypocritical.'

"[2] Dr. Johnson was no complainer of ill usage. I never heard him even lament the disregard shown to Irene, which however was a violent favourite with him; and much was he offended when having asked me once, 'what single scene afforded me most pleasure of all our tragic drama,' I, little thinking of *his* play's existence, named, perhaps with hasty impropriety, 'the dialogue between Syphax and Juba, in Addison's Cato.' 'Nay, nay,' replied he, 'if you are for declamation, I hope my two ladies have the better of them all.' This piece, however, lay dormant many years, *shelfed* (in the manager's phrase) from the time Mr. Peter Garrick presented it first on Fleetwood's table, to the hour when his brother David obtained due influence on the theatre, on which it crawled through nine nights, *supported by cordials*, but never obtaining popular applause. I asked him then to name a better scene; he pitched on that between Horatio and Lothario, in Rowe's Fair Penitent; but Mr. Murphy showed him afterwards that it was borrowed from Massinger, and had not the merit of originality.

"He was once angry with his friend Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne, for recommending to him a degree of temperance, by which alone his life could have been saved, and recommending it in his own unaltered phrase too, with praiseworthy intentions to impress it more forcibly. This quarrel, however, if quarrel it might be called, which was mere sullenness on one side and sorrow on the other, soon healed of itself, mutual reproaches having never been permitted to widen the breach, and supply, as is the common practice among coarser disputants, the original and perhaps almost forgotten cause of dispute. After some weeks, Johnson sent to request the sight of his old companion, whose feeble health held him away for some weeks more, and who, when he came, urged that feebleness as an excuse for appearing no sooner at the call of friendship in distress; but Johnson, who was then, as he expressed it, not sick but dying, told him a story of a lady, who many years before lay expiring in such tortures as that cruel disease, a cancer, naturally produces, and begged the conversation of her earliest intimate to soothe the incredible sufferings of her body, and relieve the approaching terrors of her mind; but what was the friend's apology for absence? 'Oh, my dear,' said she, 'I have really been so plunged and so pained of late by a nasty whitlow, that indeed it was quite impossible for me till to-day to attend my Lucy's call.' I think this was not more than two days before his dissolution.

"Some Lichfield friends fancied that he had half a mind to die where he was born, but that the hope of being buried in Westminster Abbey overpowered the inclination; but Dr. Johnson loved London, and many people then in London, whom I doubt not he sincerely wished to see again, particularly Mr. Sastres [3], for whose person some of the following letters manifest a strong affection, and of whose talents I have often heard him speak with great esteem. That gentleman has told me, that his fears of death ended with his hope of recovery, and that the latter days of his life passed in calm resignation to God's will, and a firm trust in his mercy.

"He burned many letters in the last week, I am told; and those written by his mother drew from him a flood of tears, when the paper they

1 How this omission happened, we are unable to account. Perhaps the executors should have asked for it; but at all events it should have been performed. That the fees for opening the ground were paid, was a matter of indispensable necessity; and there can be no doubt, from the liberality of the present dean and chapter, but they will be returned, as was offered in the case of Dryden, and was done in that of St. Evremond, who "died," says Atterbury, "renouncing the christian religion;" yet the church of Westminster thought fit, in honour to his memory, to give his body room in the Abbey, and allow him to be buried there *gratis*, so far as the chapter were concerned, though he left 800*l.* sterling behind him, which is thought every way an unaccountable piece of management. How striking the contrast between St. Evremond and Johnson!—STEEVENS. [See *ante*, p. 450, Mr. Tyers's note. It is supposed that the fees were *not* returned, and it is to be added, that all Dr. Johnson's friends, but especially Mr. Malone and Mr. Steevens, were indignant at the mean and selfish spirit which the dean and chapter exhibited on this occasion; but they were especially so against Dr. Taylor, not only for not having prevailed on his colleagues to show more respect to his old friend, but for the unfeeling manner in which he himself performed the burial service. It must, on the other hand, be confessed that Lord St. Helens corroborates the suspicion noticed by Mr. Boswell (*ante*, p. 124), that Johnson's attention to Taylor was prompted rather by the hopes of a legacy than by any very sincere friendship; for his lordship says that it was well known at Ashbourne that Taylor used to contrive to let some of his familiar friends discover, *as if by accident*, that he had remembered them in his will; and there was reason to suppose that he had for some time practised a similar device upon Johnson. It seems certain that the intercourse between these old friends, never very cordial or well assorted, had become less frequent in the latter years of Johnson's life; and that Taylor was not seen at the death-bedside, nor honoured by a legacy of remembrance in the will of his oldest friend.—The following passage, in one of Dr. Johnson's letters to Mrs. Thrale, which no doubt relates to Dr. Taylor, gives us no great idea of his elegance or literature, nor of Johnson's regard for him:—"[Taylor] has let out another pound of blood, and is come to town, brisk and vigorous, fierce and fell, to drive on his law-suit. Nothing in all life now can be *more profligate than what he is; and if in case that so be, that they persist for to resist him, he is resolved not to spare no money, nor no time.* He is, I believe, thundering away. His solicitor has turned him off; and I think it not unlikely that he will tire his lawyers. But now do n't you talk."—ED.]

2 [Some scattered anecdotes by Mrs. Piozzi having been by mistake omitted in what might have been a fitter place, are added here that the collection may be complete. —ED.]

3 [Sastres was the countryman and friend of Piozzi, and the lady therefore wishes to attribute to Dr. Johnson an extraordinary fondness for Signor Sastres, as if it gave some degree of countenance to her own miserable folly —ED.]

were written on was all consumed. Mr. Sastres saw him cast a melancholy look upon their ashes, which he took up and examined, to see if a word was still legible. Nobody has ever mentioned what became of Miss Aston's letters, though he once told me himself they should be the last papers he would destroy, and added these lines with a very faltering voice:

Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart;
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The muse forgot, and thou beloved no more.'"

Piozzi, Anec.

"In addition to his pleasantry about the French academy (vol. i. p. 555), it may be told that when some person complimented him on his superiority to the French, he replied, 'Why, what could you expect, dear sir, from fellows that eat frogs?'

"When Mr. Rose, of Hammersmith[1], contending for the preference of Scotch writers over the English, after having set up his authours like nine-pins, while the Doctor kept bowling them down again; at last, to make sure of victory, he named Ferguson upon Civil Society, and praised the book for being written in a *new* manner. 'I do not,' said Johnson, 'perceive the value of this new manner; it is only like Buckinger[2], who had no hands, and so wrote with his feet.'

"When I (Mrs. Piozzi,) knowing what subject he would like best to talk on, asked him how his opinion stood towards the question between Pascal and Soame Jennings about number and numeration? as the French philosopher observes, that infinity, though on all sides astonishing, appears most so when connected with the idea of number; for the notions of infinite number, and infinite number we know there is, stretches one's capacity still more than the idea of infinite space: 'such a notion indeed,' adds Pascal, 'can scarcely find room in the human mind.' The English authour on the other hand exclaims, 'Let no man give himself leave to talk about infinite number, for infinite number is a contradiction in terms; whatever is once numbered we all see cannot be infinite.' 'I think,' said Dr. Johnson after a pause, 'we must settle the matter thus: numeration is certainly infinite, for eternity might be employed in adding unit to unit; but every number is in itself finite, as the possibility of doubling it easily proves: besides, stop at what point you will, you find yourself as far from infinitude as ever.'

"His spirit of devotion had an energy that affected all who ever saw him pray in private. The coldest and most languid hearers of the word must have felt themselves animated by his manner of reading the Holy Scriptures; and to pray by his sick bed required strength of body as well as of mind, so vehement were his manners, and his tones of voice so pathetic.

"Though Dr. Johnson kept fast in Lent, particularly the holy week, with a rigour very dangerous to his general health; and had left off wine (for religious motives as I always believed, though he did not own it), yet he did not hold the commutation of offences by voluntary penance, or encourage others to practise severity upon themselves. He even once said, 'that he thought it an error to endeavour at pleasing God by taking the rod of reproof out of his hands[3].'

"Mr. Thrale had a very powerful influence over the Doctor, and could make him suppress many rough answers: he could likewise prevail on him to change his shirt, his coat, or his plate, almost before it became indispensably necessary.

"He once observed of a Scotch lady who had given him some kind of provocation by receiving him with less attention than he expected, 'that she resembled a dead nettle; if she were alive she would sting.'

"He rejected from his Dictionary every authority for a word that could only be gleaned from writers dangerous to religion or morality—'I would not,' said he, 'send people to look in a book for words, that by such a casual seizure of the mind might chance to mislead it forever.'

"Dr. Johnson never gave into ridiculous refinements either of speculation or practice, or suffered himself to be deluded by specious appearances. 'I have had dust thrown in my eyes too often,' would he say, 'to be blinded so. Let us never confound matters of belief with matters of opinion.' Some one urged in his presence the preference of hope to possession; and, as I remember, produced an Italian sonnet on the subject. 'Let us not,' cried Johnson, 'amuse ourselves with subtilties and sonnets, when speaking about that *hope*, which is the follower of faith and the precursor of eternity; but if you only mean those air-built hopes which to-day excites and to-morrow will destroy, let us talk away, and remember that we only talk of the pleasures of hope; we feel those of possession, and no man in his senses would change the last for the first: such hope is a mere bubble, that by a gentle breath may be blown to what size you will almost, but a rough blast bursts it at once. Hope is an amusement rather than a good, and adapted to none but very tranquil minds.'

"Of the pathetic in poetry he never liked to speak, and the only passage I ever heard him applaud as particularly tender in any common book was Jane Shore's exclamation in the last act,

'Forgive me! *but* forgive me!'

"It was not however from the want of a susceptible heart that he hated to cite tender expressions, for he was more strongly and more violently affected by the force of words representing ideas capable of affecting him at all, than any other man in the world, I believe; and when he would try to repeat the celebrated *Prosa Ecclesiastica pro Mortuis*, as it is called, beginning *Dies iræ, Dies illa*, he could never pass the stanza ending thus, *Tantus labor non sit cassus*, without bursting into a flood of tears; which sensibility I used to quote against him when he would inveigh against devotional poetry, and protest that all religious verses were cold and feeble, and unworthy the subject, which ought to be treated with higher reverence, he said, than either poets or painters could presume to excite or bestow."

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1 [It is presumed that Mrs. Piozzi meant Dr. Rose, of Chiswick.—Ed.]

2 [A person born without hands, who contrived to produce very fine specimens of penmanship.—Ed.]

3 [He certainly left it off on account of his health, but no doubt considered it a pious duty to do so, if it disordered his mind. *Ante*, vol. i p. 226.—Ed.]

One of his friends had a daughter about fourteen years old, "fat and clumsy: and though the father adored, and desired others to adore her, yet being aware perhaps that she was not what the French call *pétrie des graces*, and thinking, I suppose, that the old maxim, of beginning to laugh at yourself where you have any thing ridiculous about you, was a good one, he comically enough called his girl *Trundle* when he spoke of her; and many who bore neither of them any ill-will felt disposed to laugh at the happiness of the appellation. 'See now,' said Dr. Johnson, 'what haste people are in to be hooted. Nobody ever thought of this fellow nor of his daughter, could he but have been quiet himself, and forborne to call the eyes of the world on his dowdy and her deformity. But it teaches one to see at least, that if nobody else will nickname one's children, the parents will e'en do it themselves.'

"He had for many years a cat which he called Hodge, that kept always in his room at Fleet-street; but so exact was he not to offend the human species by superfluous attention to brutes, that when the creature was grown sick and old, and could eat nothing but oysters, Dr. Johnson always went out himself to buy Hodge's dinner, that Francis the black's delicacy might not be hurt, at seeing himself employed for the convenience of a quadruped."

He was very fond of travelling, and would have gone "all over the world; for the very act of going forward was delightful to him, and he gave himself no concern about accidents, which he said never happened: nor did the running away of the horses on the edge of a precipice between Vernon and St. Denys in France convince him to the contrary; 'for nothing came of it,' he said, 'except that Mr. Thrale leaped out of the carriage into a chalk-pit, and then came up again, looking *as white!*' When the truth was, all our lives were saved by the greatest providence ever exerted in favour of three human creatures; and the part Mr. Thrale took from desperation was the likeliest thing in the world to produce broken limbs and death.

"Yet danger in sickness he did not contemplate so steadily. One day, when he thought himself neglected by the non-attendance of Sir Richard Jebb, he conjured me to tell him what I thought of him, and I made him a steady, but as I thought a very gentle harangue, in which I confirmed all that the Doctor had been saying, how no present danger could be expected; but that his age and continued ill health must naturally accelerate the arrival of that hour which can be escaped by none. 'And this,' said Johnson, rising in great anger, 'is the voice of female friendship, I suppose, when the hand of the hangman would be softer.'

"Another day, when he was ill, and exceedingly low-spirited, and persuaded that death was not far distant, I appeared before him in a dark-coloured gown, which his bad sight, and worse apprehensions, made him mistake for an iron grey. 'Why do you delight,' said he, 'thus to thicken the gloom of misery that surrounds me? is not here sufficient accumulation of horror without anticipated mourning?' 'This is not mourning, sir,' said I, drawing the curtain, that the light might fall upon the silk, and show it was a purple mixed with green. 'Well, well,' replied he, changing his voice, 'you little creatures should never wear those sort of clothes, however: they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?'

"He was no enemy to splendour of apparel, or pomp of equipage: 'Life,' he would say, 'is barren enough surely with all her trappings; let us therefore be cautious how we strip her.' In matters of still higher moment he once observed, when speaking on the subject of sudden innovation, 'He who plants a forest may doubtless cut down a hedge: yet I could wish methinks that even he would wait till he sees his young plants grow.'

"His equity in giving the character of living acquaintance ought undoubtedly to be omitted in his own, whence partiality and prejudice were totally excluded, and truth alone presided in his tongue: a steadiness of conduct the more to be commended, as no man had stronger likings or aversions.

"When Mr. Thrale built the new library at Streatham, and hung up over the books the portraits of his favourite friends, that of Dr. Johnson was last finished, and closed the number." Upon this occasion Mrs. Thrale summed up Dr. Johnson's character in the following verses:—

"Gigantic in knowledge, in virtue, in strength,
Our company closes with Johnson at length;
So the Greeks from the cavern of Polypheme past,
When wisest, and greatest, Ulysses came last,
To his comrades contemptuous, we see him look down
On their wit and their worth with a general frown.
Since from Science' proud tree the rich fruits he receives,
Who could shake the whole trunk while they turn'd a few leaves.
His piety pure, his morality nice—
Protector of virtue, and terror of vice;
In these features Religion's firm champion display'd,
Shall make infidels fear for a modern crusade.
While th' inflammable temper, the positive tongue,
Too conscious of right for endurance of wrong,
We suffer from Johnson, contented to find,
That some notice we gain from so noble a mind;
And pardon our hurts, since so often we've found
The balm of instruction pour'd into the wound.
'Tis thus for its virtues the chemists extol
Pure rectified spirit, sublime alcohol:
From noxious putrescence, preservative pure,
A cordial in health, and in sickness a cure;
But exposed to the sun, taking fire at his rays,
Burns bright to the bottom, and ends in a blaze."

III.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. C. HICKMAN [1].

"*This letter, on the occasion of the writer's being rejected on his application for the situation of usher to the grammar school at Stourbridge* [2], *has recently been printed for the first*

1 [Probably the brother of the lady mentioned *ante*, v i. p. 33.—Ed.]

2 [Dr. Johnson was at Stourbridge school, half-schol ar, half-usher, in 1726; but it has not been stated that after his return from Oxford he attempted to become an assistant there. This letter, however, proves that he met in the summer of 1731 some disappointment at Stourbridge, and it was probably of the kind above stated. Yet that seems to be a strange subject for Mr. Hickman to have asked to see celebrated in a copy of verses. The Editor can only repeat, that the years 1730 and 1731, during which Mr. Boswell erroneously imagined that Johnson was at Oxford, are an obscure and unexplained portion of his life. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 27.—Ed.]

time, from the original, by the editor of the 'Manchester Herald.' "—*Gentleman's Magazine.*

"Lichfield, 30th Oct. 1731.

Gent. Mag. v. lxxxiii. p. 18. "SIR,—I have so long neglected to return you thanks for the favours and assistance I received from you at Stourbridge, that I am afraid you have now done expecting it. I can indeed make no apology, but by assuring you, that this delay, whatever was the cause of it, proceeded neither from forgetfulness, disrespect, nor ingratitude. Time has not made the sense of obligation less warm, nor the thanks I return less sincere. But while I am acknowledging one favour, I must beg another—that you would excuse the composition of the verses you desired. Be pleased to consider that versifying against one's inclination is the most disagreeable thing in the world; and that one's own disappointment is no inviting subject; and that though the desire of gratifying you might have prevailed over my dislike of it, yet it proves upon reflection so barren, that to attempt to write upon it, is to undertake to build without materials.

"As I am yet unemployed, I hope you will, if any thing should offer, remember and recommend, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. ELPHINSTON [1].

"20th April, 1749.

MS. "SIR,—I have for a long time intended to answer the letter which you were pleased to send me, and know not why I have delayed it so long, but that I had nothing particular either of inquiry or information to send you; and the same reason might still have the same consequence, but I find in my recluse kind of life, that I am not likely to have much more to say at one time than at another, and that therefore I may endanger by an appearance of neglect long continued, the loss of such an acquaintance as I know not where to supply. I therefore write now to assure you how sensible I am of the kindness you have always expressed to me, and how much I desire the cultivation of that benevolence which perhaps nothing but the distance between us has hindered from ripening before this time into friendship. Of myself I have very little to say, and of any body else less; let me however be allowed one thing, and that in my own favour—that I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. GEORGE STRAHAN, AT SCHOOL.

"19th Feb. [1763.]

Rose MSS. "DEAR GEORGE,—I am glad that you have found the benefit of confidence, and hope you will never want a friend to whom you may safely disclose any painful secret. The state of your mind you had not so concealed but that it was suspected at home, which I mention that if any hint should be given you, it may not be imputed to me, who have told nothing but to yourself, who had told more than you intended.

"I hope you read more of Nepos, or of some other book, than you construe to Mr. Bright. The more books you look into for your entertainment, with the greater variety of style you will make yourself acquainted. Turner I do not know; but think that if Clark be better, you should change it, for I shall never be willing that you should trouble yourself with more than one book to learn the government of words. What book that one shall be, Mr. Bright must determine. Be but diligent in reading and writing, and doubt not of the success. Be pleased to make my compliments to Miss Page and the gentleman. I am, dear sir, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"26th March, 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—You did not very soon answer my letter, and therefore cannot complain that I make no great haste to answer yours. I am well enough satisfied with the proficiency that you make, and hope that you will not relax the vigour of your diligence. I hope you begin now to see that all is possible which was professed. Learning is a wide field, but six years spent in close application are a long time; and I am still of opinion, that if you continue to consider knowledge as the most pleasing and desirable of all acquisitions, and do not suffer your course to be interrupted, you may take your degree not only without deficiency, but with great distinction.

"You must still continue to write Latin. This is the most difficult part, indeed the only part that is very difficult of your undertaking. If you can exemplify the rules of syntax, I know not whether it will be worth while to trouble yourself with any more translations. You will more increase your number of words, and advance your skill in phraseology, by making a short theme or two every day; and when you have construed properly a stated number of verses, it will be pleasing to go from reading to composition, and from composition to reading. But do not be very particular about method; any method will do if there be but diligence. Let me know, if you please, once a week what you are doing. I am, dear George, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"16th April, 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—Your account of your proficience is more nearly equal, I find, to my expectations than your own. You are angry that a theme on which you took so much pains was at last a kind of English Latin; what could you expect more? If at the end of seven years you write good Latin, you will excel most of your contemporaries: Scribendo disces, scribere. It is only by writing ill that you can attain to write well. Be but diligent and constant, and make no doubt of success.

"I will allow you but six weeks for Tully's Offices. Walker's Particles I would not have you trouble yourself to learn at all by heart, but look in it from time to time, and observe his notes and remarks, and see how they are exemplified. The translation from Clark's history will improve you, and I would have you continue it to the end of the book.

[See *ante*, vol. i. p. 85.—ED.]

"I hope you read by the way at loose hours other books, though you do not mention them; for no time is to be lost; and what can be done with a master is but a small part of the whole.

would have you now and then try at some English verses. When you find that you have mistaken any thing, review the passage carefully and settle it in your mind.

"Be pleased to make my compliments, and those of Miss Williams, to all our friends. I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"20th Sept. 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—I should have answered your last letter sooner if I could have given you any valuable or useful directions; but I knew not any way by which the composition of Latin verses can be much facilitated. Of the grammatical part which comprises the knowledge of the measure of the foot, and quantity of the syllables, your grammar will teach you all that can be taught, and even of that you can hardly know any thing by rule but the measure of the foot. The quantity of syllables even of those for which rules are given is commonly learned by practice and retained by observation. For the poetical part, which comprises variety of expression, propriety of terms, dexterity in selecting commodious words, and readiness in changing their order, it will all be produced by frequent essays and resolute perseverance. The less help you have the sooner you will be able to go forward without help.

"I suppose you are now ready for another authour. I would not have you dwell longer upon one book than till your familiarity with its style makes it easy to you. Every new book will for a time be difficult. Make it a rule to write something in Latin every day; and let me know what you are now doing, and what your scheme is to do next. Be pleased to give my compliments to Mr. Bright, Mr. Stevenson, and Miss Page. I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"14th July, 1763.

"DEAR GEORGE,—To give pain ought always to be painful, and I am sorry that I have been the occasion of any uneasiness to you, to whom I hope never to [do] any thing but for your benefit or your pleasure. Your uneasiness was without any reason on your part, as you had written with sufficient frequency to me, and I had only neglected to answer them, because as nothing new had been proposed to your study, no new direction or incitement could be offered you. But if it had happened that you had omitted what you did not omit, and that I had for an hour, or a week, or a much longer time, though myself put out of your mind by something to which presence gave that prevalence, which presence will sometimes give even where there is the most prudence and experience, you are not to imagine that my friendship is light enough to be blown away by the first cross blast, or that my regard or kindness hangs by so slender a hair as to be broken off by the unfelt weight of a petty offence. I love you, and hope to love you long. You have hitherto done nothing to diminish my good will, and though you had done much more than you have supposed imputed to you, my good will would not have been diminished.

"I write thus largely on this suspicion, which you have suffered to enter into your mind, because in youth we are apt to be too rigorous in our expectations, and to suppose that the duties of life are to be performed with unfailing exactness and regularity; but in our progress through life we are forced to abate much of our demands, and to take friends such as we can find them, not as we would make them.

"These concessions every wise man is more ready to make to others, as he knows that he shall often want them for himself; and when he remembers how often he fails in the observance of a cultivation of his best friends, is willing to suppose that his friends may in their turn neglect him, without any intention to offend him.

"When therefore it shall happen, as happen it will, that you or I have disappointed the expectation of the other, you are not to suppose that you have lost me, or that I intended to lose you; nothing will remain but to repair the fault, and to go on as if it never had been committed. I am, sir, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"Oxford, 27th Oct. [1768.]

"Your letter has scarcely come time enough to make an answer possible. I wish we could talk over the affair. I cannot go now. I must finish my book. I do not know Mr. Collier[1]. I have not money beforehand sufficient. How long have you known Collier, that you should put yourself into his hands? I once told you that ladies were timorous and yet not cautious. Reyn MSS.

"If I might tell my thoughts to one with whom they never had any weight, I should think it best to go through France. The expense is not great; I do not much like obligation, nor think the grossness of a ship very suitable to a lady. Do not go till I see you. I will see you as soon as I can. I am, my dearest, most sincerely yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO W. S. JOHNSON[2], LL. D. STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, London, March 4, 1773

"SIR,—Of all those whom the various accidents of life have brought within my notice, there is scarce any man whose acquaintance I have more desired to cultivate than yours. I cannot indeed charge Gent. Mag. v. xcv. p. 320.

1 Captain Collier, since Sir George, proposed at that time to sail to the Mediterranean *with his lady*.—Miss REYNOLDS. And it would seem offered Miss Reynolds a passage; and Miss Reynolds appears to have wished that Johnson might be of the party. Sir Joshua had gone to the Mediterranean in a similar way with Captain Keppel.—ED.]

2 The late William Samuel Johnson of Connecticut. This gentleman spent several years in England about the middle of the last century. He received the degree of doctor of civil law from the university of Oxford; and this circumstance, together with the accidental similarity of name, recommended him to the acquaintance of Dr. Samuel Johnson. Several letters passed between

you with neglecting me, yet our mutual inclination could never gratify itself with opportunities. The current of the day always bore us away from one another, and now the Atlantic is between us.

"Whether you carried away an impression of me as pleasing as that which you left me of yourself, I know not; if you did you have not forgotten me, and will be glad that I do not forget you. Merely to be remembered is indeed a barren pleasure, but it is one of the pleasures which is more sensibly felt as human nature is more exalted.

"To make you wish that I should have you in my mind, I would be glad to tell you something which you do not know; but all public affairs are printed; and as you and I have no common friend, I can tell you no private history.

"The government, I think, grow stronger, but I am afraid the next general election will be a time of uncommon turbulence, violence, and outrage.

"Of literature no great product has appeared, or is expected; the attention of the people has for some years been otherwise employed.

"I was told a day or two ago of a design which must excite some curiosity. Two ships are in preparation which are under the command of Captain Constantine Phipps, to explore the northern ocean; not to seek the north-east or the north-west passage, but to sail directly north, as near the pole as they can go. They hope to find an open ocean, but I suspect it is one mass of perpetual congelation. I do not much wish well to discoveries, for I am always afraid they will end in conquest and robbery.

"I have been out of order this winter, but am grown better. Can I never hope to see you again, or must I be always content to tell you that in another hemisphere I am sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

"23d April, 1773.

"SIR,—I beg that you will excuse my absence to the club; I am going this evening to Oxford.

"I have another favour to beg. It is that I may be considered as proposing Mr. Boswell for a candidate of our society, and that he may be considered as regularly nominated. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO FRANCIS FOWKE, ESQ.

"11th July, 1776.

"SIR,—I received some weeks ago[1] a collection of papers, which contain the trial of my dear friend, Joseph Fowke, of whom I cannot easily be induced to think otherwise than well, and who seems to have been injured by the prosecution and the sentence. His first desire is, that I should prepare his narrative for the press; his second, that if I cannot gratify him by publication, I would transmit the papers to you. To a compliance with his first request I have this objection; that I live in a reciprocation of civilities with Mr. Hastings, and therefore cannot properly diffuse a narrative, intended to bring upon him the censure of the publick. Of two adversaries, it would be rash to condemn either upon the evidence of the other; and a common friend must keep himself suspended, at least till he has heard both.

"I am therefore ready to transmit to you the papers, which have been seen only by myself, and beg to be informed how they may be conveyed to you. I see no legal objections to the publication; and of prudential reasons, Mr. Fowke and you will be allowed to be fitter judges.

"If you would have me send them, let me have proper directions: if a messenger is to call for them, give me notice by the post, that they may be ready for delivery.

"To do my dear Mr. Fowke any good would give me pleasure; I hope for some opportunity of performing the duties of friendship to him, without violating them with regard to another. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Gent. Mag. vol. lxxxvii. p. 528.

"TO RICHARD BEATNIFFE, ESQ.

"Bolt-Court, Fleet-street, 14th Feb. 1782

"SIR,—Robert Levet, with whom I have been connected by a friendship of many years, died lately at my house. His death was sudden, and no will has yet been found; I therefore gave notice of his death in the papers, that an heir, if he has any, may appear. He has left very little; but of that little his brother is doubtless heir, and your friend may be perhaps his brother. I have had another application from one who calls himself his bro-

vol. lxxxix. p. 382.

them, after the American Dr. Johnson had returned to his native country; of which, however, it is feared that this is the only one remaining.—*Gent. Mag.*

1 [This circumstance enables us to state that the East Indian friend, mentioned in p. 55, was Mr. Joseph Fowke, and to guess that *he* (and not one of the Vansittarts, as Mr. Tyers thought) was alluded to in vol. i. p. 136. The arrival of this "collection of papers" is no doubt the curious incident mentioned *ante*, p. 57.—ED.] Mr. J. Fowke, who died about 1794, was born about the year 1715, and entered into the service of the East India Company at the age of 17. He remained at Fort St. George till 1748, and when he returned to England was offered the government either of Bengal or Madras. This offer was by no means so advantageous as it would be at present; Mr. Fowke therefore declined it, and remained in England until 1771. At this period he returned to India, where some differences of opinion unfortunately occurred between him and the Provisional Government, which ended in his being tried in June, 1775, in the Supreme Court of Bengal, under two indictments. In the first of these trials the verdict was, not guilty. In the second, in which Mr. Fowke was implicated with Nundocomar and Rada Churn, the verdict was, "Joseph Fowke and Nundocomar, guilty; Rada Churn, not guilty." In the year 1788 Mr. Fowke finally quitted Bengal, with a recommendation from Lord Cornwallis to the Court of Directors, as a person entitled to receive the pension which was promised to their servants returning from Bengal out of employment. This recommendation was, however, rejected. After a lapse of some time, the claim was brought forward by Mr. Burke [with the readers of whose works the case of Nundocomar must be familiar] in the House of Commons, when the following resolution was made in his favour:—

"Resolved, That it appears to this House, that the said Joseph Fowke is entitled to the pension or allowance engaged to be paid by the East India Company to their servants, under certain descriptions, and under certain conditions, expressed in their letter from the Court of Directors of the 21st of September, 1785, to the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, from the time in which, by the said letter of the 21st of September, 1785, persons described in the said letter were to receive the same."—*Gent. Mag.*

ther; and I suppose it is fit that the claimant should give some proofs of his relation. I would gladly know, from the gentleman that thinks himself R. Levett's brother,

"In what year, and in what parish, R. Levet was born?

"Where or how was he educated?

"What was his early course of life?

"What were the marks of his person; his stature; the colour of his eyes?

"Was he marked with the small-pox?

"Had he any impediment in his speech?

"What relations had he, and how many are now living?

"His answer to these questions will show whether he knew him: and he may then proceed to show that he is his brother.

"He may be sure, that nothing shall be hastily wasted or removed. I have not looked into his boxes, but transferred that business to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, of character above suspicion. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. NICHOLS.

"10th January, 1783.

1784, p. 893. "SIR,—I am much obliged by your kind communication of your account of Hinckley [1]. I know Mr. Carte is one of the prebendaries of Lichfield, and for some time surrogate of the chancellor. Now I will put you in a way of showing me more kindness. I have been confined by illness a long time; and sickness and solitude make tedious evenings. Come sometimes and see, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

It was Sir Joshua Reynolds who introduced Mr. Crabbe's poem, (see *ante*, p. 329) *to Dr. Johnson's notice, and the following is the letter with which he returned it, and which was not found till it was too late to insert it in its proper place.*—REYN. MS.

"4th March, 1783.

"SIR,—I have sent you back Mr. Crabbe's poem, which I read with great delight. It is original, vigorous, and elegant.

"The alterations which I have made I do not require him to adopt, for my lines are, perhaps, not often better than his own; but he may take mine and his own together, and perhaps between them produce something better than either.

"He is not to think his copy wantonly defaced. A wet sponge will wash all the red lines away, and leave the page clear.

"His dedication will be least liked. It were better to contract it into a short sprightly address.

"I do not doubt Mr. Crabbe's success. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] For this work Dr. Johnson had contributed several hints towards the Life of Anthony Blackwall, to whom, when very young, he had been some time an usher at Market Bosworth school. Blackwall died in April, 1730, before Johnson was one and twenty.—NICHOLS.

"TO JOSEPH FOWKE, ESQ.

"19th April, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—To show you that neither length of time, nor distance of place, withdraws you from my memory, I have sent you a little present [2], which will be transmitted by Sir Robert Chambers. Gent. Mag. 1817, p. 528.

"To your former letters I made no answer, because I had none to make. Of the death of the unfortunate man (meaning Nundocomar) I believe Europe thinks as you think; but it was past prevention; and it was not fit for me to move a question in publick which I was not qualified to discuss, as the inquiry could then do no good; and I might have been silenced by a hardy denial of facts, which, if denied, I could not prove.

"Since we parted, I have suffered much sickness of body and perturbation of mind. My mind, if I do not flatter myself, is unimpaired, except that sometimes my memory is less ready; but my body, though by nature very strong, has given way to repeated shocks.

"*Genua labant, vastos quatit æger anhelitus artus.* This line might have been written on purpose for me. You will see, however, that I have not totally forsaken literature. I can apply better to books than I could in some more vigorous parts of my life—at least than I *did;* and I have one more reason for reading—that time has, by taking away my companions, left me less opportunity of conversation. I have led an inactive and careless life; it is time at last to be diligent: there is yet provision to be made for eternity. Æn. v. 432.

"Let me know, dear sir, what you are doing. Are you accumulating gold, or picking up diamonds? Or are you now sated with Indian wealth, and content with what you have? Have you vigour for bustle, or tranquillity for inaction? Whatever you do, I do not suspect you of pillaging or oppressing; and shall rejoice to see you return with a body unbroken, and a mind uncorrupted.

"You and I had hardly any common friends, and therefore I have few anecdotes to relate to you. Mr. Levet, who brought us into acquaintance, died suddenly at my house last year, in his seventy-eighth year, or about that age. Mrs. Williams, the blind lady, is still with me, but much broken by a very wearisome and obstinate disease. She is, however, not likely to die; and it would delight me if you would send her some *petty* token of your remembrance: you may send me one too. Gent. Mag. 1817, p. 529.

"Whether we shall ever meet again in this world, who can tell? Let us, however, wish well to each other: prayers can pass the Line and the Tropics. I am, dear sir, yours sincerely,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. NICHOLS.

"12th April, 1784.

"SIR,—I have sent you enclosed a very curious proposal from Mr. Hawkins, the son of Sir John Hawkins, who, I believe, will take care that whatever his son promises shall be performed.

"If you are inclined to publish this compila-

[2] A collection of the Doctor's Works.—NICHOLS.

tion, the editor will agree for an edition on the following terms, which I think liberal enough.

"That you shall print the book at your own charge.

"That the sale shall be wholly for your benefit till your expenses are repaid; except that at the time of publication you shall put into the hands of the editor, without price, . . . copies for his friends.

"That, when you have been repaid, the profits arising from the sale of the remaining copies shall be divided equally between you and the editor.

"That the edition shall not comprise fewer than five hundred. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. SASTRES.

"Ashbourne, 21st August, 1784.

Piozzi Letters, vol. ii. p. 405.

"DEAR SIR,—I am glad that a letter has at last reached you; what became of the two former, which were directed to *Mortimer* instead of *Margaret*-street, I have no means of knowing, nor is it worth the while to inquire; they neither enclosed bills, nor contained secrets.

"My health was for some time quite at a stand, if it did not rather go backwards; but for a week past it flatters me with appearances of amendment, which I dare yet hardly credit. My breath has been certainly less obstructed for eight days; and yesterday the water seemed to be disposed to a fuller flow. But I get very little sleep; and my legs do not like to carry me.

"You were kind in paying my forfeits at the club; it cannot be expected that many should meet in the summer; however, they that continue in town should keep up appearances as well as they can. I hope to be again among you.

"I wish you had told me distinctly the mistakes in the French words. The French is but a secondary and subordinate part of your design; exactness, however, in all parts is necessary, though complete exactness cannot be attained; and the French are so well stocked with dictionaries, that a little attention may easily keep you safe from gross faults; and as you work on, your vigilance will be quickened, and your observation regulated; you will better know your own wants, and learn better whence they may be supplied. Let me know minutely the whole state of your negotiations. Dictionaries are like watches, the worst is better than none, and the best cannot be expected to go quite true.

"The weather here is very strange summer weather; and we are here two degrees nearer the north than you. I was, I think, loath to think a fire necessary in July, till I found one in the servants' hall, and thought myself entitled to as much warmth as them.

"I wish you would make it a task to yourself to write to me twice a week; a letter is a great relief to, dear sir, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

"Ashbourne, 2d September, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Your critick seems to be an exquisite Frenchman; his remarks are nice; they would at least have escaped me. I wish you better luck with your next specimen; though if such slips as these are to condemn a dictionary, I know not when a dictionary will be made. I cannot yet think that *gourmander* is wrong; but I have here no means of verifying my opinion.

"My health, by the mercy of God, still improves; and I have hope of standing the English winter, and of seeing you, and reading Petrarch at Bolt-court; but let me not flatter myself too much. I am yet weak, but stronger than I was.

"I suppose the Club is now almost forsaken; but we shall I hope meet again. We have lost poor Allen; a very worthy man, and to me a very kind and officious neighbour.

"Of the pieces ascribed by Bembo to Virgil, the *Dirce* (ascribed, I think, to Valerius Cato), the *Copa* and the *Moretum* are, together with the *Culex* and *Ceiris*, in Scaliger's *Appendix ad Virgilium*. The rest I never heard the name of before.

"I am highly pleased with your account of the gentleman and lady with whom you lodge; such characters have sufficient attractions to draw me towards them; you are lucky to light upon them in the casual commerce of life.

"Continue, dear sir, to write to me; and let me hear any thing or nothing, as the chance of the day may be. I am, sir, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

"Ashbourne, 16th September, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—What you have told me of your landlord and his lady at Brompton has made them such favourites, that I am not sorry to hear how you are turned out of your lodgings, because the good is greater to them than the evil is to you.

"The death of dear Mr. Allen gave me pain. When after some time of absence I visit a town, I find my friends dead; when I leave a place, I am followed with intelligence, that the friend whom I hope to meet at my return is swallowed in the grave. This is a gloomy scene; but let us learn from it to prepare for our own removal. Allen is gone; Sastres and Johnson are hasting after him; may we be both well prepared!

"I again wish your next specimen success. *Paymistress* can hardly be said without a preface (it may be expressed by a word perhaps not in use, pay mistress).

"The club is, it seems, totally deserted; but as the forfeits go on, the house does not suffer; and all clubs, I suppose, are unattended in the summer. We shall, I hope, meet in winter, and be cheerful.

"After this week, do not write to me till you hear again from me, for I know not well where I shall be; I have grown weary of the solitude of this place, and think of removal. I am, sir, your, &c."

"TO MR. STRAHAN.

"16th October, 1784.

Gent. Mag. 1788, p. 49.

"DEAR SIR,—I have hitherto omitted to give you that account of myself, which the kindness with which you have treated me gives you a right to expect.

"I went away feeble, asthmatical, and dropsi-

cal. The asthma has remitted for a time, but is now very troublesome; the weakness still continues, but the dropsy has disappeared; and has twice, in the summer, yielded to medicine. I hope to return with a body somewhat, however little, relieved, and with a mind less dejected.

"I hope your dear lady and dear little ones are all well, and all happy; I love them all. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. SASTRES.

"Lichfield, 20th October, 1784.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 410.

SIR,—You have abundance of naughty tricks; is this your way of writing to a poor sick friend twice a week? Post comes after post, and brings no letter from Mr. Sastres. If you know any thing, write and tell it; if you know nothing, write and say that you know nothing.

"What comes of the specimen? If the booksellers want a specimen, in which a keen critick can spy no faults, they must wait for another generation. Had not the Crusca faults? Did not the academicians of France commit many faults? It is enough that a dictionary is better than others of the same kind. A perfect performance of any kind is not to be expected, and certainly not a perfect dictionary.

"Mrs. Desmoulins never writes, and I know not how things go on at home; tell me, dear sir, what you can.

"If Mr. Seward be in town, tell me his direction, for I ought to write to him.

"I am very weak, and have had bad nights. I am, dear sir, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

"Lichfield, 1st November, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I beg you to continue the frequency of your letters; every letter is a cordial; but you must not wonder that I do not answer with exact punctuality. You may always have something to tell: you live among the various orders of mankind, and may make a letter from the exploits, sometimes of the philosopher, and sometimes of the pickpocket. You see some balloons succeed and some miscarry, and a thousand strange and a thousand foolish things. But I see nothing; I must make my letter from what I feel, and what I feel with so little delight, that I cannot love to talk of it.

"I am certainly not to come to town, but do not omit to write; for I know not when I shall come, and the loss of a letter is not much. I am, dear sir, your, &c."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. NICHOLS[1].

"27th July, 1778.

Gent. Mag. vol. lv. p. 9.

"You have now all Cowley. I have been drawn to a great length; but Cowley or [and] Waller never had any critical examination before. I am very far advanced in Dryden, who will be long too. The next great Life I purpose to be Milton's.

"It will be kind if you will gather the Lives of Denham, Butler, and Waller, and bind them in half-binding in a small volume, and let me have it to show my friends as soon as may be. I sincerely hope the press shall stand no more[2].

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"August, 1778.

"You have now the Life of Dryden, and you see it is very long. It must, however, have an Appendix. 1. The invocation to the Georgicks, from Milbourne. (This in the small print). 2. Dryden's Remarks on Rymer; which are ready transcribed. 3. Dryden's Letter, from Lambeth; which is promised me."

"26th November, 1778.

"Mr. Johnson will hope for Mr. Nichols's company to tea, about six this afternoon, to talk of the Index, and settle the terms.—Monday.

"I am very well contented that the Index is settled; for though the price is low, it is not penurious. Mr. M. having been for some time out of business, is in some little perplexities, from which twelve guineas will set him free. This, we hope, you will advance; and, during the continuance of the work subject to your inspection, he desires a weekly payment of sixteen shillings, the rest to remain till it is completed.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"1st March, 1779.

"Mr. Johnson purposes to make his next attempt upon Prior, at least to consider him very soon; and desires that some volumes published of his papers, in two vols. 8vo. may be procured.

"The Turtle and Sparrow can be but a fable[3]. The Conversation I never read.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"In examining this book, I find it necessary to add to the Life the preface to the 'British Enchanters;' and you may add, if you will, the notes on 'Unnatural Flights.' I am, sir, &c.—Friday."

"There is a copy of verses by Fenton on the 'First Fit of the Gout,' in Pope's Miscellanies, and I think in the last volumes of Dryden. In Pope's I am sure.

Answ. "I should have given Fenton's birth to Shelton[4] in Staffordshire, but that I am afraid there is no such place. The rest I have, except his secretaryship, of which I know not what to make. When Lord Orrery was in an office, Lewis was his secretary. Lewis lived in my time; I knew him. The gout verses were always given to Fenton, when I was young, and

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1 [Here follow such of the short letters and notes referred to by Mr. Boswell, *ante*, p. 268, *n.* 1, as he did not introduce into his text.—ED.]

2 The first life that was begun at the press was that of Cowley, in December, 1777. The progress made in July, 1778, appears above. Butler was the Life in which the Doctor at that time more particularly prided himself. Milton was begun in January, 1779, and finished in six weeks.—NICHOLS.

3 This refers to a hint given him in consequence of what is said in the Life of Prior, that of his "Tales there are only four."—NICHOLS.

4 It is now said to be "near Newcastle." Shelton (near Newcastle-under-Line) is to be found in Staffordshire in the Index Villaris of 1700.—NICHOLS.

he was living. Lord Orrery told me that Fenton was his tutor; but never thought he was his father's secretary 1. Pray let me see the Oxford and Cambridge [Verses], &c. [1707]. If you are sure it was published by Fenton, I shall take notice of it."

"Mr. Johnson desires Mr. Nichols to send him Ruffhead's Life of Pope, Pope's works, Swift's works with Dr. Hawkesworth's Life, Lyttelton's works; and with these he hopes to have done. The first to be got is Lyttelton."

"Mr. Johnson, being now at home, desires the last leaves of the criticism on Pope's epitaphs, and he will correct them. Mr. N. is entreated to save the proof sheets of Pope, because they are promised to a lady 3, who desires to have them."

"In reading Rowe in your edition, which is very impudently called mine, I observed a little piece unnaturally and odiously obscene. I was offended, but was still more offended when I could not find it in Rowe's genuine volumes 4. To admit it, had been wrong; to interpolate it, is surely worse. If I had known of such a piece in the whole collection, I should have been angry. What can be done?"

"24th May, 1780.

"Mr. Johnson is obliged to Mr. Nichols for his communication 5, and must have Hammond again. Mr. Johnson would be glad of Blackmore's Essays for a few days."

"16th June, 1780.

"I have been out of order, but by bleeding and physick think I am better, and can go again to work. Your note on Broome 6 will do me much good. Can you give me a few dates for A. Phillips? I wrote to Cambridge about them, but have had no answer."

"Dr. Warton tells me that Collins's first piece 7 is in the *Gent. Mag.* for August, 1739. In August there is no such thing. Amasius was at that time the poetical name of Dr. Swan, who translated Sydenham. Where to find Collins I know not. I think I must make some short addition to Thomson's sheet, but will send it to-day."

"This Life of Dr. Young was written by a friend of his son [Mr. Croft]. What is crossed with black is expunged by the authour; what is crossed with red is expunged by me. If you find any thing more that can well be omitted, I shall not be sorry to see it yet shorter."

"16th August, 1780.

"I expected to have found a Life of Lord Lyttelton prefixed to his works. Is there not one before the quarto edition? I think there is; if not, I am, with respect to him, quite aground."

"Brighthelmstone, 26th Oct. 1780.

"I think you never need send back the revises unless something important occurs. Little things, if I omit them, you will do me the favour of setting right yourself. Our post is awkward, as you will find, and I fancy you will find it best to send two sheets at once."

"16th April, 1781.

"Mr. Johnson desires Mr. Nichols to send him a set of the last Lives, and would be glad to know how the octavo edition goes forward."

"10th June, 1781.

"My desire being to complete the sets of Lives which I have formerly presented to my friends, I have occasion for a few of the first volumes; of which, by some misapprehension, I have received a great number, which I desire to exchange for the latter volumes. I wish success to the new edition. Please to deliver to Mr. Steevens a complete set of the Lives in 12mo."

"26th December, 1781.

"Mr. Johnson, being much out of order, sent in search of the book, but it is not found. He will, if he is better, look himself diligently to-morrow. He thanks Mr. Nichols for all his favours."

"28th October, 1782.

"What will the booksellers give me for this new edition? I know not what to ask. I would have twenty-four sets bound in plain calf, and figured with the number of the volumes. For the rest, they may please themselves."

IV.

Unpublished Prayers by Dr. Johnson.

"Easter day, 15th April, 1759.

"Almighty and most merciful Father, look down with pity upon my sins. I am a sinner, good Lord; but let not my sins burthen me for ever. Give me thy grace to break the chain of evil custom. Enable me to shake off idleness and sloth: to will and to do what thou hast commanded, grant me chaste in thoughts, words and actions; to love and frequent thy worship, to study and understand thy word; to be diligent in my calling, that I may support myself and relieve others. Pearson MSS.

"Forgive me, O Lord, whatever my mother has suffered by my fault, whatever I have done amiss, and whatever duty I have neglected. Let me not sink into useless dejection; but so sanctify my affliction, O Lord, that I may be converted and healed; and that, by the help of thy Holy Spirit, I may obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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1 Dr. Johnson retracted this opinion, as Fenton in his Life is styled "secretary." Fenton was secretary to Lord Orrery when he commanded a regiment in Flanders, and was dismissed in 1705, four years before Dr. Johnson was born.—Nichols. [There is some mistake in the statement of Dr. Johnson. The first mention of Lord *Orrery* was probably a slip of the pen for *Oxford*, whose secretary Lewis was.—Ed.]

2 See Lives of the Poets, vol. iii. p. 111.—Nichols.

3 Probably to Miss Burney.—Nichols.

4 The epigram on a lady at the tragedy of Cato, which has not only appeared in the works of Rowe, but has been transplanted by Pope into the "Miscellanies" he published in his own name and that of Dean Swift.—Nichols. [This would have been a sufficient excuse (if one were needed) for the Editor's omission of two or three indelicate expressions which escaped from Mr. Boswell in the course of his work.—Ed.]

5 Lives of the Poets, vol. iii. p. 185.—Nichols.

6 "Select Collection," vol. iv. p. 283.—Nichols.

7 Qu. What was it?—Nichols.

"And O Lord, so far as it may be lawful, I commend unto thy fatherly goodness my father, brother, wife and mother, beseeching thee to make them happy for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

"SCRUPLES.

Rose MSS. "O Lord, who wouldst that all men should be saved, and who knowest that without thy grace we can do nothing acceptable to thee, have mercy upon me. Enable me to break the chain of my sins, to reject sensuality in thought, and to overcome and suppress vain scruples; and to use such diligence in lawful employment as may enable me to support myself and do good to others. O Lord, forgive me the time lost in idleness; pardon the sins which I have committed, and grant that I may redeem the time mispent, and be reconciled to thee by true repentance, that I may live and die in peace, and be received to everlasting happiness. Take not from me, O Lord, thy holy Spirit, but let me have support and comfort for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

"Transc. June 26th, 1768. Of this prayer there is no date, nor can I conjecture when it was composed."

V.

Account of Dr. Johnson's last Dinner[1] at Streatham.

"Oct. 6, Die Dominica, 1782.

Rose MSS. "Pransus sum Streathamiæ agninum crus coctum cum herbis (spinach) comminutis, farcimen farinaceum cum uvis passis, lumbos bovillos, et pullum gallinæ Turcicæ; et post carnes missas, ficus, uvas, non admodum maturas, ita voluit anni intemperies, cum malis Persicis, iis tamen duris. Non lætus accubui, cibum modicè sumpsi, ne intemperantiâ ad extremum peccaretur. Si recte memini, in mentem venerunt epulæ in exequiis Hadoni celebratæ. Streathamiam quando revisan?"

VI.

A Poetical Review of the Literary and Moral Character of the late Samuel Johnson, ll. d. with Notes by John Courtenay, Esq.

Man is thy theme; his virtue, or his rage,
Drawn to the life, in each elaborate page.—Waller.

———*immensæ veluti conneza carinæ*
Cymba minor.—Statius[2].

London: Printed for Charles Dilly, in the Poultry, 1786.

The following poem was never very popular, and is now so scarce that it was not without difficulty that a copy was procured on this occasion to print from. The subject, "sermoni proprior," *is not favourable to poetry; the criticism is sometimes superficial and erroneous; and the raillery frequently offends good feeling and good taste. It is, however, with all these defects, and, indeed, on account of these defects, deserving a place in this collection of* Johnsoniana, *not only as a tribute to the general excellence of Dr. Johnson's character, but in order that some of the errors it contains may be corrected.*

The authour, once a considerable person in the political and literary world, is fading so fast from public memory, that the Editor is glad to be able to present his readers with the following biographical notice of Mr. Courtenay, from the pen of their common friend, Sir James Mackintosh. —Ed.]

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF MR. COURTENAY.

Mackintosh. John Courtenay was so intimate a friend of Boswell, and so long a member of the club, founded by Johnson, that a short account of him may not be misplaced in this work.

He was born at Carlingford, in August, 1738. The first of his family in Ireland settled there in the reign of Elizabeth, and married a sister of the Deputy Chichester, as appears from a monument at Carrickfergus. His grandfather served under King William at the Boyne. His father, a younger son, obtained a situation in the revenue. He was himself educated at the school of Dundalk, where he read and relished the best writers of Greece and Rome; but he became so much infected with a passion for the army, or rather, for its show and dissipation, that he would not gratify his father by pursuing his studies at the university.

In 1756 he purchased an ensigncy, and seems to have combined the conviviality of the time with desultory reading and careless composition. In 1765, when on the eve of purchasing a company, he was disappointed by an accident: he relinquished the army in a fit of ill humour, and applied the purchase-money to buy the place of a commissary of musters, thus unfortunately renouncing all regular advancement in a profession. He married, obtained leave to sell his place, and, after paying his debts, found himself possessed of six hundred pounds.

About that time Dr. Lucas, a man then popular at Dublin, had published a severe pamphlet against the sentence of a court-martial. Courtenay, prompted by old military feelings, employed his very idle hours in an answer, which obtained some commendation, and earned for him the patronage of Lord Townshend, then lord-lieutenant. He soon after became one of the writers of the "Bachelor," a government paper, conducted by Simcox, a clergyman, but chiefly written by Courtenay, Marlay[3], afterward a bishop, and Jephson[4], a dramatic poet of note. It was a main part of the task of these advocates of the

1 [He seems to have taken leave of the *kitchen* as well as of the *church* at Streatham in Latin. See *ante*, p. 322. The phrase "ne intemperanti *ad extremum* peccaretur" is remarkable, and proves that this, which at first sight looks like burlesque, was written when in sober sadness.—Ed.]

2 [These two mottos would suit Mr. Boswell's work better than Mr. Courtenay's. The reader will observe in the latter quotation the original of Pope's celebrated and beautiful compliment to St. John.—*Essay on Man, Epist.* iv. *l.* 385.—Ed.]

3 [*Ante*, p. 283.—Ed.]

4 [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 260, and p. 397 of this vol.—Ed.]

Castle to counteract the "Baratarian Letters," an Irish imitation of Junius, which, attacking the lord-lieutenant's government, received contributions from Flood, and first published Grattan's character of Chatham. Previous to the recall of the lord-lieutenant he gave Courtenay the place of barrack-master of Kinsale, and soon after his return to England appointed him secretary to the master-general of the ordnance. Though in that confidential relation to a minister, Courtenay agreed more in opinion, and was more connected with the Opposition, as may be pretty certainly inferred from his intimacy with Mr. Windham, than an oppositionist of more than common violence, who used to meet him often at the Thatched-house, as Courtenay said, to drink a glass to the health of General Washington.

In 1780, Lord Townshend gave him a seat for Tamworth, which he long retained. He sometimes made ineffectual attempts to vindicate his consistency in voting for the minister, on the plea that he could no longer support the Americans after they had received French aid; as if those, whom he considered as exposing themselves to destruction in a righteous cause, might not lawfully seek for succour wherever they could find it. This, however, was the period of his chief success in parliament. He was then invited often to the evening convivial parties of Rigby, a man of wit and pleasure: he became an intimate friend of Mr. Gerard Hamilton, a man of considerable literature and of fastidious taste in his companions, and of Boswell, a zealous, but good-natured tory.

At the coalition, in 1783, he was appointed surveyor-general of the ordnance. After the expulsion of that administration, he refused to retain the office, which was handsomely offered to him by the Duke of Richmond: the letters of both do them credit. Henceforwards he attached himself to Mr. Fox, during a long and rigid exclusion from office. On one occasion he took a step not believed to be agreeable to that great man. At a dinner at Lord Lauderdale's, in Leicester-square, in spring 1792, he put his name, with others, of whom the present writer was one, to the Association of the "Friends of the People for the promotion of Parliamentary Reform," saying, as he pushed the writing materials on to his next neighbour, "There goes Tamworth." Mr. Fox, with difficulty saved him from the necessity of leaving England in 1796 and in 1802, by procuring a seat for him.

In 1806, Mr. Fox wished to have restored him to the ordnance, but a high influence obtained that place for another, and Courtenay, after twenty-five years of opposition, had a twelvemonth's seat at the treasury.

In 1812, when aged, lonely, infirm, and nearly bed-ridden, he was rescued from cruel sufferings by the generosity of the late Lord Thanet. Even in that situation, when found at his dinner, consisting of the claw of a lobster, by one of his few visiters, he used to make his repast a subject of merriment.

The happy marriages of two daughters were, for a short time, bright spots in his little sphere; but though his life was unprosperous, it was not, thanks to his temper, unhappy. The consolations of friendship he deserved and possessed among political opponents in time of much heat. Mr. Windham and Lord Stowell, Mr. Malone, and even Mr. Burke, continued to show kindness to him. He was frequently a guest of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of whose table he gave an amusing description [which is inserted *ante*, p. 78.]

His parliamentary speeches, by which he was best known, did injustice to his powers. He was in truth a man of fine talents, and of various accomplishments, which rendered his conversation agreeable, as his good-nature and kind heart obtained for him the attachment of many excellent friends. But, from his speeches, strangers mistook him for a jester by profession. Every Irishman has wit, but Courtenay's drollery had not that polish and urbanity, of which pleasantry stands in greater need than perhaps any other endowment.

He fell into two not easily forgotten mistakes; the one was a somewhat unrefined attack on Mr. Canning, whom he mistook for a declaiming schoolboy; the other was an attack on Mr. Wilberforce, whose meekness and gentleness he unluckily regarded, before he knew him, as proofs of want of wit. The following extract from some criticism on parliamentary speakers written by him long after, is an agreeable proof that, in the case of Mr. Wilberforce, he discovered his error, and was willing to acknowledge the justice of the chastisement. "He (Mr. W.) is quick and acute in debate, and always prompt to answer and reply. When he is provoked to personality (which seldom happens) he retorts in a poignant and refined vein of satire, peculiarly his own." In the same criticism he makes reparation to Mr. Canning, by owning that "his wit is keen," but he tries to excuse himself by adding, "that it is sometimes flippant."

He died at his humble lodging, in Duke-street, Portland-place, on the 21st of March, 1815, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

To the early connexion of Mr. Courtenay with General Fraser, in the family of Lord Townshend, the writer of this note, (who is the General's grand-nephew) owed the beginning of a kindness which lasted till Courtenay's death. Fraser was Lord Townshend's aid-de-camp at Quebec in 1759, where by means of some French acquired when an officer in the Scotch regiments in the service of the states-general, he had the good fortune to render a more important service than is usually within the reach of an officer of the rank which he held at that time. When rowing down the river St. Lawrence, and on the point of landing, the night before the battle, they were observed by a French sentinel, who called to him for "the word," which the British officers did not know. Fraser answered in an audible whisper in French, "Hold your tongue; they will overhear us." The sentinel believed them to be a French reinforcement, and they effected their landing without disturbance. He went with Lord Townshend to Ireland, and he was killed in Burgoyne's army at Stillwater, near Saratoga, on the 7th October, 1777. His death has been affectingly represented by the pencil and the pen.

The writer attended Mr. Courtenay's funeral, almost the only duty of a friend and an executor which circumstances left for him to perform; unless he may be allowed to consider as another of these duties the present attempt to preserve a short account of Mr. Courtenay, in which he has studi

ously endeavoured to avoid all exaggeration, and has laboured to shun that undue expansion which he cannot help considering as a sort of tacit exaggeration.—MACKINTOSH.

A generous tear will Caledonia shed?
Her ancient foe, illustrious Johnson's dead:
Mac-Ossian's sons may now securely rest,
Safe from the bitter sneer, the cynick jest[1].
Lost is the man, who scarce deigns Gray to praise,
But from the grave calls Blackmore's sleeping lays;
A passport grants to Pomfret's dismal chimes,
To Yalden's hymns, and Watts's holy rhymes[2];
By subtle doubts would Swift's fair fame invade,
And round his brows the ray of glory shade[3];
With poignant taunt mild Shenstone's life arraigns,
His taste contemns, and sweetly-flowing strains;
At zealous Milton aims his tory dart,
But in his Savage finds a moral heart,
At great Nassau despiteful rancour flings[4],
But pension'd knees ev'n to usurping kings:
Rich, old, and dying, bows his laurel'd head,
And almost deigns to ask superfluous bread[5].
A sceptick once, he taught the letter'd throng
To doubt the existence of famed Ossian's song;
Yet by the eye of faith, in reason's spite,
Saw ghosts and witches, preach'd up *second-sight*
For o'er his soul sad superstition threw
Her gloom, and tinged his genius with her hue.
On popish ground he takes his high church station,
To sound mysterious tenets through the nation[6];

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1 "A Scotchman must be a sturdy moralist, who does not prefer Scotland to truth." *Johnson's Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland.*—COURTENAY.

2 "The Poems of Dr. Watts were, by my recommendation, inserted in this collection; the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden." *Johnson's Life of Watts.* The following specimen of their productions may be sufficient to enable the reader to judge of their respective merits:—

"Alas, Jerusalem! alas! where 's now
Thy pristine glory, thy unmatch'd renown,
To which the heathen monarchies did bow?
Ah, hapless, miserable town!"
Eleazar's Lamentation over Jerusalem, paraphrased by Pomfret.

"Before the Almighty Artist framed the sky,
Or gave the earth its harmony,
His first command was for thy light;
He view'd the lovely birth, and bless'd it.
In purple swaddling bands it struggling lay,
Old Chaos then a cheerful smile put on,
And from thy beauteous form did first presage its own."
Yalden's Hymn to Light.

"My cheerful soul now all the day
Sits waiting here and sings;
Looks through the ruins of her clay,
And practises her wings.
O, rather let this flesh decay,
The ruins wider grow;
Till, glad to see the enlarged way,
I stretch my pinions through."
A Sight of Heaven in Sickness by Isaac Watts.—COURTENAY.

[The Editor is not without some apprehensions, that *he* may incur a similar censure, for having recommended the introduction of Mr. Courtenay's poem into this collection.—ED.]

3 He seemed to me to have an unaccountable prejudice against Swift. He said to-day, "I doubt if the 'Tale of a Tub' was his; it has so much more thinking, more knowledge, more power, more colour, than any of the works that are indisputably his. If it was his, I shall only say, he was *impar sibi.*"—*Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides*, p. 38. Dr. Johnson's "unaccountable prejudice against Swift" may probably be derived from the same source as Blackmore's, if we may venture to form a judgment from the panegyrick he bestows on the following groundless invective, expressly aimed at Swift, as the authour of "A Tale of a Tub," which he quotes in his life of Blackmore: "Several, in their books, have many sarcastical and spiteful strokes at religion in general; while others make themselves pleasant with the principles of the christian. Of the last kind, this age has seen a most audacious example in the book entitled 'A Tale of a Tub.' Had this writing been published in a pagan or *popish* nation, who are *justly* impatient of all indignity offered to the established religion of their country, no doubt but the authour would have received the punishment he deserved. But the fate of this impious buffoon is very different; for, in a protestant kingdom, zealous of their civil and religious immunities, he has not only escaped affronts, and the effects of publick resentment, but has been caressed and patronized by persons of great figure of all denominations." The malevolent dulness of bigotry alone could have inspired Blackmore with these sentiments. The fact is, that the "Tale of a Tub" is a continued panegyrick on the Church of England, and a bitter satire on Popery, Calvanism, and every sect of dissenters. At the same time I am persuaded, that every reader of taste and discernment will perceive, in many parts of Swift's other writings, strong internal proofs of that style which characterises the "Tale of a Tub;" especially in the "Public Spirit of the Whigs." It is well known, that he affected simplicity, and studiously avoided any display of learning, except where the subject made it absolutely necessary. Temporary, local, and political topicks compose too great a part of his works; but in a treatise that admitted "more thinking, more knowledge," &c. he naturally exerted all his powers. Let us hear the authour himself on this point. "The greatest part of that book was finished above thirteen years since (1696), which is eight years before it was published. The authour was then young, his invention at the height, and his reading fresh in his head." And again: "Men should be more cautious in losing their time, if they did but consider, that to answer a book effectually requireth more pains and skill, more wit, learning, and judgment than were employed in writing it. And the authour assureth those gentlemen, who have given themselves that trouble with him, that his discourse is the product of the study, the observation and the invention of *several years;* that he often blotted out more than he left; and if his papers had not been a long time out of his possession, they must still have undergone more severe corrections." "An Apology for the Tale of a Tub."—With respect to this work being the production of Swift, see his letter to the printer, Mr. Benjamin Tooke, dated Dublin, June 29, 1710, and Tooke's answer on the publication of the "Apology" and a new edition of the "Tale of a Tub."—*Hawkesworth's edition of Swift's Works*, 8vo. vol. xvi. p. 145. Dr. Hawkesworth mentions, in his preface, that the edition of "A Tale of a Tub," printed in 1710, was revised and corrected by the Dean a short time before his understanding was impaired, and that the corrected copy was, in the year 1760, in the hands of his kinsman, Mr Dean Swift.—COURTENAY.

4 JOHNSON. "I would tell truth of the two Georges, or of that *scoundrel*, King William." *Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides, ante*, v. i. p. 410.—COURTENAY.

5 See his letter to Lord Thurlow, in which he seems to approve of the application (though he was not previously consulted), thanks his lordship for having made it, and even seems to express some degree of surprise and resentment on the proposed addition to his pension being refused.—COURTENAY. [It seems very strange, that after Sir Joshua Reynolds had received Lord Thurlow's letter of the 18th Nov. 1784, he should still have permitted Dr. Johnson and all his friends to remain in the belief, that the king *had been applied to and had refused.* See *ante*, p. 413.—ED.]

6 "If (added Dr. Johnson) God had never spoken figuratively, we might hold that he speaks literally, when he says, 'This is my body.'" *Boswell's Tour*, p. 67. Here his only objection to transubstantiation seems to rest on the style of the scripture being figurative elsewhere as well as in this passage. Hence we may infer, that he would otherwise have believed in it. But archbishop Tillotson and Mr. Locke reason more philosophically, by asserting, that "no doctrine, however clearly expressed in scripture, is to be admitted, if it contradict the evidence of our senses:—For our evidence for the truth of revealed religion is *less* than the evidence for the truth of our senses, because, *even* in the first authors of our religion, it was no greater; and it is evident it must diminish in passing from them to us, through the

On Scotland's kirk he vents a bigot's gall [1],
Though her young chieftains prophesy like SAUL [2]!
On Tetty's state his frighted fancy runs [3],
And Heaven's appeased by cross unbutter'd buns [4]:
He sleeps and fasts [5], pens on himself a libel [6],
And still believes, but never reads the Bible [7].
Fame says, at school, of scripture science vain,
Bel and the Dragon smote him on the brain [8];
Scared with the blow, he shunn'd the Jewish law,
And eyed the ark with reverential awe [9]:
Let priestly Strahan, in a godly fit,
The tale relate, in aid of Holy Writ;
Though candid Adams, by whom David fell [10],
Who ancient miracles sustain'd so well,
To recent wonders may deny his aid [11],
Nor own a pious brother of the trade.

A coward wish, long stigmatized by fame,
Devotes Mæcenas to eternal shame [12];
Religious Johnson, future life to gain,
Would ev'n submit to everlasting pain:
How clear, how strong, such kindred colours paint
The Roman epicure and Christian saint!
O, had he lived in more enlighten'd times,
When signs from heaven proclaim'd vile mortals' crimes,
How had he groan'd, with sacred horrors pale,
When Noah's comet shook her angry tail [13];
That wicked comet, which Will Whiston swore
Would burn the earth that she had drown'd before [14]!
Or when Moll Tofts, by throes parturient vex'd,
Saw her young rabbits peep from Esdras' text [15]!

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medium of human testimony." COURTENAY. [Mr. Courtenay's sneer at Dr. Johnson's opinion on transubstantiation is surely unmerited. No doubt, *if* there were no other figurative expressions in the scriptures, this single text must have been understood literally by Dr. Johnson, or any other man of common sense; and as to what Mr. Courtenay adds about the evidence of our senses, and attributes to Mr. Locke and Archbishop Tillotson, these writers, and particularly Tillotson, appear to limit their assertion to doctrines, the subjects of which are properly within the evidence of our senses. Could Mr. Courtenay doubt that Tillotson believed in the *Trinity*?—Yet how stands that doctrine with the mere evidence of our senses?—ED.]

1 See his conversation with Lord Auchinleck. *Boswell's Tour, ante*, vol. i. p. 458.—COURTENAY.

2 See the First Book of Samuel, ch. x.—COURTENAY.

3 "And I commend to thy fatherly goodness the soul of my departed wife, beseeching thee to grant her whatever is best in her present state." *Johnson's Meditations.*—COURTENAY.

4 "I returned home, but could not settle my mind. At last I read a chapter. Then went down about six or seven, and ate two cross-buns." *Meditations*, p. 154.—COURTENAY.

5 "I fasted, though less rigorously than at other times. I by negligence poured some milk into my tea." *Ibid.* p. 146. "Yesterday I fasted, as I have always, or commonly done, since the death of Tetty: the fast was more painful than usual."—COURTENAY.

6 "PURPOSES.

"To keep a journal. To begin this day (September 18th, 1766).

"To spend four hours in study every day, and as much more as I can.

"To read a portion of scripture in Greek every Sunday.

"To rise at eight.—Oct. 3d. Of all this I have done nothing." *Ibid.*—COURTENAY.

7 "I resolved last Easter to read, within the year, the whole Bible; a great part of which I had never looked upon." *Meditations.*—COURTENAY.

8 "I have never yet read the Apocrypha. When I was a boy I have read or heard Bel and the Dragon." *Meditations.*—COURTENAY. [It is not worth while to show that, in several of the foregoing allusions, that verse *above* is often a misrepresentation of the prose *below*, and that Mr. Courtenay plays the mere verbal critic on these expressions, while the *spirit* escapes him. If, indeed (as from Dr. Strahan's preface might be believed), Dr. Johnson had *directed the publication* of these "Meditations" as an example of his own piety, or an incentive to that of others, Mr. Courtenay might have been forgiven if he had made his satire still more poignant. It is hoped, however, that, after the explanations given (*ante*, preface, vol. i. p. 97, and ii. p. 427), that Dr. Johnson will hereafter receive the full credit for the piety which prompted these "Meditations," without any of the ridicule or obloquy of having prepared them for publication.—ED.]

9 See the First Book of Samuel, ch. v. and vi., in which an account is given of the punishment of the Philistines for looking into the ark.—COURTENAY.

10 The Rev. Dr. Adams, of Oxford, distinguished for his answer to David Hume's "Essay on Miracles."—COURTENAY.

11 From the following letter there is reason to apprehend that Dr. Adams would not support Mr. Strahan, if he should add this to the other singular anecdotes that he has published relative to Dr. Johnson.

"*Oxford*, 22d *Oct.* 1785.

"MR. URBAN.—*In your last month's review of books, you have asserted, that the publication of Dr. Johnson's 'Prayers and Meditations' appears to have been at the instance of Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, Oxford. This, I think, is more than you are warranted by the editor's preface to say; and is so far from being true, that Dr. Adams never saw a line of these compositions before they appeared in print, nor ever heard from Dr. Johnson, or the editor, that any such existed. Had he been consulted about the publication, he would certainly have given his voice against it: and he therefore hopes that you will clear him, in as public a manner as you can, from being any way accessary to it.*

"WM. ADAMS."—COURTENAY.

12 "Debilem facito manu,
Debilem pede, coxa,
Tuber adstrue gibberum;
Lubricos quate dentes,
Vita dum superest, bene est:
Hanc mihi, vel acuta
Si sedeam cruce, sustine."—*Senec. Epist.*

Let me but live, the famed Mæcenas cries,
Lame of both hands, and lame in feet and thighs;
Hump-back'd and toothless;—all convulsed with pain,
Ev'n on the cross,—so precious life remain.

Dr. Johnson, in his last illness, is said to have declared (in the presence of Doctors H. and B.) that he would prefer a state of existence in eternal pain to annihilation.—COURTENAY. [The Editor finds no evidence of this, and the subsequent testimony of Drs. Heberden and Brocklesby inclines him to disbelieve it. It is not very clear here, whether Mr. Courtenay meant to *censure* Johnson for a "kindred" wish to that of Mæcenas, or to *praise* him as a "christian saint," for aspiring after even a painful immortality; but 'tis really of no importance. All these flippancies of Mr. Courtenay may be regretted on his own account, but they cannot affect the character of Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

13 "This last comet, which appeared in the year 1680, I may well call the most remarkable one that ever appeared; since, besides the former consideration, I shall presently show, that it is no other than that very comet, which came by the earth at the time of Noah's deluge, and which was the cause of the same." *Whiston's Theory of the Earth*, p. 188.—COURTENAY.

14 "Since 575 years appear to be the period of the comet that caused the deluge, what a learned friend, who was the occasion of my examination of this matter, suggests, will deserve to be considered; viz. Whether the story of the phœnix, that celebrated emblem of the resurrection in christian antiquity, (that it returns once after five centuries, and goes to the altar and city of the sun, and is there burnt; and another arises out of its ashes, and carries away the remains of the former, &c.) be not an allegorical representation of this comet, which returns once after five centuries, and goes down to the sun, and is there vehemently heated, and its outward regions dissolved; yet that it flies off again, and carries away what remains after that terrible burning, &c.; and whether the *conflagration* and renovation of things, which some such comet may bring on the earth, be not hereby prefigured, I will not here be positive: but I own, that I do not know of any solution of this famous piece of mythology and hieroglyphics, as this seems to be, that can be compared with it." *Ibid.* p. 196.—COURTENAY.

15 "'Tis here foretold (by Esdras) that there should be *signs in the woman*; and before all others this predic-

To him such signs, prepared by mystick grace,
Had shown the impending doom of Adam's race.
But who to blaze his frailties feels delight,
When the great Author rises to our sight?
When the pure tenour of his life we view,
Himself the bright exemplar that he drew?
Whose works console the good, instruct the wise,
And teach the soul to claim her kindred skies.
By grateful bards his name be ever sung,
Whose sterling touch has fix'd the English tongue!
Fortune's dire weight, the patron's cold disdain,
"Shook off, like dew-drops from the lion's mane[1];"
Unknown, unaided, in a friendless state[2],
Without one smile of favour from the great;
The bulky tome his curious care refines,
Till the great work in full perfection shines:
His wide research and patient skill displays
What scarce was sketch'd in Anna's golden days[3];
What only learning's aggregated toil
Slowly accomplish'd in each foreign soil[4].
Yet to the mine though the rich coin he trace,
No current marks his early essays grace;
For in each page we find a massy store
Of English bullion mix'd with Latian ore:
In solemn pomp, with pedantry combined,
He vents the morbid sadness of his mind[5];
In scientifick phrase affects to smile,
Form'd on Brown's turgid Latin-English style[6];
Where oft the abstract in stiff state presides[7],
And measured numbers, measured periods guides.
But all propriety his Ramblers mock,
When Betty prates from Newton and from Locke,
When no diversity we trace between
The lofty moralist and gay fifteen[8].—
Yet genius still breaks through the encumbering phrase;
His taste we censure, but the work we praise:
There learning beams with fancy's brilliant dyes
Vivid as lights that gild the northern skies;
Man's complex heart he bears to open day,
Clear as the prism unfolds the blended ray:
The picture from his mind assumes its hue,
The shade 's too dark, but the design still true.
Though Johnson's merits thus I freely scan,
And paint the foibles of this wondrous man;
Yet can I coolly read, and not admire,
When learning, wit, and poetry conspire
To shed a radiance o'er his moral page,
And spread truth's sacred light to many an age:
For all his works with innate lustre shine,
Strength all his own, and energy divine:
While through life's maze he darts his piercing view,
His mind expansive to the object grew.
In judgment keen he acts the critic's part,
By reason proves the feelings of the heart;
In thought profound, in nature's study wise,
Shows from what source our fine sensations rise;
With truth, precision, fancy's claims defines,
Aud throws new splendour o'er the poet's lines[9].
When specious sophists with presumption scan
The source of evil, hidden still from man[10];

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tion has been verified in the famous *rabbit woman of Surrey*, in the days of King George I. This story has been so unjustly laughed out of countenance, that I must distinctly give my reasons for believing it to be true, and alleging it here as the fulfilling of this ancient prophecy before us. 1st. The man-midwife, Mr. Howard, of Godalming, Surrey, a person of very great honesty, skill and reputation in his profession, attested it. It was believed by King George to be real; and it was also believed by my old friends, the speaker and Mr. Samuel Collet, as they told me themselves, and was generally by sober persons in the neighbourhood. Nay, Mr. Molyneux, the prince's secretary, a very inquisitive person, and my very worthy friend, assured me he had at first so great a diffidence in the truth of the fact, and was so little biassed by the other believers, even by the king himself, that he would not be satisfied till he was permitted both to see and feel the rabbit, *in that very passage, whence we all come into this world.*"—*Whiston's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 110.—COURTENAY.

1 "The incumbrances of fortune were shaken from his mind, like dew-drops from the lion's mane." *Johnson's Preface to his edition of Shakspeare.*—COURTENAY.

2 Every reader of sensibility must be strongly affected by the following pathetic passages:—"Much of my life has been lost under the pressures of disease; much has been trifled away, and much has always been spent in provision for the day that was passing over me; but I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble, if by my assistance foreign nations and distant ages gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth; if my labours afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle."—"In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the authour, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns, yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it, that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow." *Preface to Dr. Johnson's Dictionary.*—COURTENAY.

3 See Swift's letter to Lord Oxford for the institution of an academy to improve and fix the English language —COURTENAY.

4 The great French and Italian Dictionaries were not he productions of an individual, but were compiled by a body of academicians in each country.—COURTENAY.

5 "In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments, either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporeal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty when a greater is incurred." *Rambler*, No. 110.—COURTENAY.

6 The style of the "Ramblers" seems to have been formed on that of Sir Thomas Brown's "Vulgar Errors and Christian Morals." "But ice is water congealed by the frigidity of the air, whereby it acquireth no new form, but rather a consistence or determination of its deffluency, and amitteth not its essence, but condition of fluidity. Neither doth there any thing properly conglaciate but water, or watery humidity, for the determination of quicksilver is properly fixation, that of milk coagulation, and that of oil and unctuous bodies only incrassation."—Is this written by Brown or Johnson?—COURTENAY. [This criticism is not just, or at least not well placed. Brown is treating of *scientific* effects, and uses learned language; any other writer would probably have done the same: the real objection is that which Mr. Courtenay states afterwards—namely, that Johnson uses these learned words on inappropriate occasions.—ED.]

7 In the "Ramblers" the abstract too often occurs instead of the concrete;—one of Dr. Johnson's peculiarities. —COURTENAY.

8 See "Victoria's Letter," *Rambler*, No. 130. "I was never permitted to sleep till I had passed through the cosmetick discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and may-dews: my hair was perfumed with a variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss dimples and clear discolorations."—COURTENAY.

9 See his admirable "Lives of the Poets," and particularly his disquisition on metaphysical and religious poetry.—COURTENAY.

10 See his review of Soame Jennings's [Jenyns]" Essay on the Origin of Evil;" a masterpiece of composition

Revive Arabian tales [1], and vainly hope
To rival St. John and his scholar, Pope [2]:
Though metaphysicks spread the gloom of night,
By reason's star he guides our aching sight;
The bounds of knowledge marks, and points the way
To pathless wastes, where wilder'd sages stray;
Where, like a farthing link-boy, Jenyns stands;
And the dim torch drops from his feeble hands.
Impressive truth, in splendid fiction drest [3],
Checks the vain wish, and calms the troubled breast;
O'er the dark mind a light celestial throws,
And soothes the angry passions to repose:
As oil effused illumes and smooths the deep [4],
When round the bark the swelling surges sweep.—
With various stores of erudition fraught,
The lively image, the deep searching thought,
Slept in repose;—but when the moment press'd,
The bright ideas stood at once confess'd [5];
Instant his genius sped its vigorous rays,
And o'er the lettered world diffused a blaze:
As womb'd with fire the cloud electrick flies,
And calmly o'er the horizon seems to rise;
Touch'd by the pointed steel, the lightning flows,
And all the expanse with rich effulgence glows.
Soft-eyed compassion with a look benign,
His fervent vows he offer'd at thy shrine;
To guilt, to woe, the sacred debt was paid [6],
And helpless females bless'd his pious aid;
Snatch'd from disease, and want's abandon'd crew,
Despair and anguish from their victims flew:
Hope's soothing balm into their bosoms stole,
And tears of penitence restored the soul.
But hark, he sings! the strain even Pope admires;
Indignant Virtue her own bard inspires;
Sublime as Juvenal, he pours his lays [7],
And with the Roman shares congenial praise:—
In glowing numbers now he fires the age,
And Shakspeare's sun relumes the clouded stage [8].
So full his mind with images was fraught,
The rapid strains scarce claim'd a second thought,
And with like ease his vivid lines assume
The garb and dignity of ancient Rome.—
Let college *versemen* flat conceits express,
Trick'd out in splendid shreds of Virgil's dress;
From playful Ovid cull the tinsel phrase,
And vapid notions hitch in pilfer'd lays;
Then with mosaick art the piece combine,
And boast the glitter of each dulcet line:
Johnson adventured boldly to transfuse
His vigorous sense into the Latian muse;
Aspired to shine by unreflected light,
And with a Roman's ardour *think* and write.
He felt the tuneful Nine his breast inspire,
And, like a master, waked the soothing [9] lyre:
Horatian strains a grateful heart proclaim,
While Sky's wild rocks resound his Thralia's name.—
Hesperia's plant, in some less skilful hands,
To bloom awhile, factitious heat demands;
Though glowing Maro a faint warmth supplies,
The sickly blossom in the hot-house dies:
By Johnson's genial culture, art, and toil,
Its root strikes deep, and owns a fostering soil;
Imbibes our sun through all its swelling veins,
And grows a native of Britannia's plains.
How few distinguish'd of the studious train
At the gay board their empire can maintain!
In their own books intomb'd their wisdom lies;
Too dull for talk, their slow conceptions rise:
Yet the mute author, of his writings proud,
For wit unshown claims homage from the crowd,
As thread-bare misers, by mean avarice school'd,
Expect obeisance for their hidden gold.—
In converse quick, impetuous Johnson press'd
His weighty logick, or sarcastick jest:
Strong in the chase, or nimble in the turns [10],
For victory still his fervid spirit burns;

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both for vigour of style and precision of ideas.—COURTENAY.

1 Pope's, or rather Bolingbroke's, system was borrowed from the Arabian metaphysicians.—COURTENAY.

2 The scheme of the "Essay on Man" was given by Lord Bolingbroke to Pope.—COURTENAY. [Dr. Johnson doubted this, and there seems good reason to believe that Bolingbroke's contribution towards the Essay on Man has been greatly overstated.—ED.]

3 See that sublime and beautiful tale, "The Prince of Abyssinia," and "The Rambler," No. 65, 204, &c. &c.—COURTENAY.

4 "The world is disposed to call this a discovery of Dr. Franklin's from his paper inserted in the "Philosophical Transactions,") but in this they are much mistaken. Pliny, Plutarch, and other naturalists were acquainted with it.—"Ea natura est olei, ut lucem afferat, ac tranquillat omnia, etiam mare, quo non aliud elementum implacabilius." *Memoirs of the Society of Manchester.*—COURTENAY.

5 Dr. Johnson's extraordinary facility of composition is well known from many circumstances. He wrote forty pages of the "Life of Savage" in one night. He composed seventy lines of his "Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal," and wrote them down from memory, without altering a word. In the prologue on opening Drury-lane theatre, he changed but one word, and that in compliment to Mr. Garrick. Some of his "Ramblers" were written while the printer's messenger was waiting to carry the copy to the press. Many of the "Idlers" were written at Oxford: Dr. Johnson often began his task only just in time not to miss the post, and sent away the paper without reading it over.—COURTENAY.

6 The dignified and affecting letter written by him to the king in the name of Dr. Dodd, after his condemnation, is justly and, I believe, universally admired. His benevolence, indeed, was uniform and unbounded. I have been assured, that he has often been so much affected by the sight of several unfortunate women, whom he has seen almost perishing in the streets, that he has taken them to his own house; had them attended with care and tenderness; and, on their recovery, clothed, and placed them in a way of life to earn their bread by honest industry.—COURTENAY. [See *ante*, p. 395. Such a circumstance may have happened once, but it is absurd to represent it as *habitual* as Mr. Courtenay has done. Dr. Johnson's house never was without the superintendence of a respectable lady, who, of course, would not have tolerated any frequent practice of such irregular charity.—ED.]

7 "London," a Satire, and "The Vanity of Human Wishes," are both imitated from Juvenal. On the publication of "London" in 1738, Mr. Pope was so much struck by it, that he desired Mr. Dodsley, his bookseller, to find out the authour. Dodsley having sought him in vain for some time, Mr. Pope said he would very soon be *deterre*. Afterwards Mr. Richardson, the painter, found out Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Pope recommended him to Lord Gower.—COURTENAY.

8 See the prologue spoken by Mr. Garrick in 1747, on the opening of Drury-lane theatre.—COURTENAY.

9 "Inter *ignotæ* strepitus *loquelæ*." *Ode to Mrs. Thrale.*—COURTENAY. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 375.—ED.]

10 "A good continued speech says Bacon in his 'Essays') without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness; and a good reply, or second speech, without a good settled speech, showeth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course, are yet *nimblest in their turn;* as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare." If this observation be just, Dr. Johnson is an exception to the rule; for he was certainly as *strong* "in the course, as nimble in the turn;" as ready in "reply," as in "a settled speech."—COURTENAY. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 275. n. Lord St

Subtle when wrong, invincible when right,
Arm'd at all points, and glorying in his might,
Gladiator like, he traverses the field,
And strength and skill compel the foe to yield.—
Yet have I seen him, with a milder air,
Encircled by the witty and the fair,
Even in old age and placid mien rejoice
At beauty's smile, and beauty's flattering voice.—
With Reynolds' pencil, vivid, bold, and true,
So fervent Boswell gives him to our view
In every trait we see his mind expand;
The master rises by the pupil's hand;
We love the writer, praise his happy vein,
Graced with the naiveté of the sage Montaigne.
Hence not alone are brighter parts display'd,
But even the specks of character portray'd:
We *see* the Rambler with fastidious smile
Mark the lone tree, and note the heath-clad isle;
But when the heroick tale of Flora charms [1].
Deck'd in a kilt, he wields a chieftain's arms:
The tuneful piper sounds a martial strain,
And Samuel sings, "The king shall have his ain:"
Two Georges in his loyal zeal are slurr'd [2],
A gracious pension only saves the third!—
By nature's gifts ordain'd mankind to rule,
He, like a Titian, form'd his brilliant school;
And taught congenial spirits to excel,
While from his lips impressive wisdom fell.
Our boasted Goldsmith felt the sovereign sway;
To him we owe his sweet yet nervous lay.
To fame's proud cliff he bade our Raphael rise;
Hence Reynolds' pen with Reynolds' pencil vies.
With Johnson's flame melodious Burney glows [3],
While the grand strain in smoother cadence flows.
And thou, Malone, to critick learning dear,
Correct and elegant, refined, though clear,
By studying him, first form'd that classick taste,
Which high in Shakspeare's fane thy statue plac'd.
Near Johnson, Steevens stands, on scenick ground,
Acute, laborious, fertile, and profound.
Ingenious Hawkesworth to this school we owe,
And scarce the pupil from the tutor know.
Here early parts [4] accomplish'd Jones sublimes,
And science blends with Asia's lofty rhymes:
Harmonious Jones! who in his splendid strains
Sings Camdeo's sports on Agra's flowery plains;
In Hindu fictions while we fondly trace
Love and the Muses, deck'd with Attick grace [5].
Amid these names can Boswell be forgot,
Scarce by North Britons now esteem'd a Scot?

Who to the sage devoted from his youth,
Imbibed from him the sacred love of truth;
The keen research, the exercise of mind,
And that best art, the art to know mankind.—
Nor was his energy confined alone
To friends around his philosophick throne:
Its influence wide improved our letter'd isle,
And lucid vigour mark'd the general style:
As Nile's proud waves, swol'n from their oozy bed,
First o'er the neighbouring meads majestic spread;
Till gathering force, they more and more expand,
And with new virtue fertilize the land.
Thus sings the Muse, to Johnson's memory just,
And scatters praise and censure o'er his dust;
For through each checker'd scene a contrast ran,
Too sad a proof, how great, how weak is man!
Though o'er his passions conscience held the rein,
He shook at dismal phantoms of the brain:
A boundless faith that noble mind debased,
By piercing wit, energic reason graced:
A generous Briton [6], yet he seem'd to hope
For James's grandson, and for James's Pope'
Though proudly splenetick, yet idly vain,
Accepted flattery, and dealt disdain.—
E'en shades like these, to brilliancy allied,
May comfort fools, and curb the sage's pride.
Yet learning's sons, who o'er his foibles mourn
To latest time shall fondly view his urn;
And wondering praise, to human frailties blind,
Talents and virtues of the brightest kind;
Revere the man, with various knowledge stored,
Who science, arts, and life's whole scheme explored;
Who firmly scorned, when in a lowly state,
To flatter vice, or court the vain and great [8];
Whose heart still felt a sympathetick glow,
Prompt to relieve man's variegated woe;
Who even share his talents with his friends [9],
By noble means who aimed at noble ends [10];
Whose ardent hope, intensely fixed on high,
Saw future bliss with intellectual eye.
Still in his breast religion held her sway,
Disclosing visions of celestial day;

Helens has since informed the Editor, that his father, Mr. Fitzherbert, had confirmed to him the account of Johnson's failure at the Society of Arts.—Ed.]

1 The celebrated Flora Macdonald. See Boswell's *Tour*.—Courtenay.

2 See note 4, p. 520.—Courtenay.

3 Dr. Burney's "History of Musick" is equally distinguished for elegance and perspicuity of style, and for scientifick knowledge.—Courtenay.

4 Sir William Jones produced that learned and ingenious work, "Poeseos Asiaticæ Commentarii," at a very early age.—Courtenay.

5 "The Hindu God, to whom the following poem is addressed, appears evidently the same with the Grecian Eros and the Roman Cupido. His favourite place of resort is a large tract of country round Agra, and principally the plains of Matra, where Krishen also and the nine Gopia, who are clearly the Apollo and Muses of the Greeks, usually spend the night with music and dance." *Preface to the Hymn to Camdeo*, translated from the Hindu language into Persian, and re-translated by Sir William Jones. There can be little doubt, considering the antiquity and early civilization of Hindostan, that both the philosophy and beautiful mythology of the Greeks were drawn from that part of Asia.—Courtenay.

6 When Dr. Johnson repeated to Mr. Boswell Goldsmith's beautiful eulogium on the English nation, his eyes filled with tears. See the Dissertation on the Bravery of the English common Soldiers, at the end of the "Idler."—Courtenay.

7 [This imputation is very unjust. Dr. Johnson never "*seemed to hope*" for the restoration of papal authority or the advance of the Roman Catholic religion, though he very naturally and properly respected the latter, as one of the great classes of christianity.—Ed.]

8 It is observable, that Dr. Johnson did not prefix a dedication to any one of his various works.—Courtenay. ["His character lifted him into so much consequence, that it occasioned several respectable writers to dedicate their works to him. This was to receive more reverence than he paid." Tyers. *Gent. Mag.* Feb. 1785, p. 86.—Ed.]

9 The papers in the "Adventurer," signed with the letter T. are commonly attributed to one of Dr. Johnson's earliest and most intimate friends, Mr. Bathurst; but there is good reason to believe that they were written by Dr. Johnson, and given by him to his friend. At that time Dr. Johnson was himself engaged in writing the "Rambler," and could ill afford to make a present of his labours. The various other pieces that he gave away have bestowed fame, and probably fortune, on several persons. To the real disgrace of some of his clerical friends, forty sermons, which he himself tells us he wrote, have not yet been *deterres*.—Courtenay. [See on both the points alluded to in this note *ante*, vol. i. p. 96; vol. ii. p. 472; vol. i. p. 138; and vol. ii. p. 124.—Ed.]

10 "Who noble ends by noble means obtains."—Pope

And gave his soul, amidst this world of strife,
The blest reversion of eternal life:
By this dispelled, each doubt and horror flies,
And calm at length in holy peace he dies.
The sculptured trophy, and imperial bust,
That proudly rise around his hallow'd dust,
Shall mouldering fall, by Time's slow hand decay'd,
But the bright meed of virtue ne'er shall fade.
Exulting genius stamps his sacred name,
Enroll'd for ever in the dome of fame.

VII.

[CHARACTER OF DR. JOHNSON, by DR. HORNE, Bishop of Norwich, published in the Olla Podrida, and *referred to in vol.* v. *p.* 453.]

"When a friend told Johnson that he was much blamed for having unveiled the weakness of Pope, 'Sir,' said he, 'if one man undertake to write the life of another, he undertakes to exhibit his true and real character; but this can be done only by a faithful and accurate delineation of the particulars which discriminate that character.'

"The biographers of this great man seem conscientiously to have followed the rule thus laid down by him, and have very fairly communicated all they knew, whether to his advantage, or otherwise. Much concern, disquietude, and offence have been occasioned by this their conduct in the minds of many, who apprehend that the cause in which he stood forth will suffer by the infirmities of the advocate being thus exposed to the prying and malignant eye of the world.

"But did these persons then ever suppose, or did they imagine that the world ever supposed, Dr. Johnson to have been a perfect character? Alas! no: we all know how that matter stands, if we ever look into our own hearts, and duly watch the current of our own thoughts, works, words, and actions. Johnson was honest, and kept a faithful diary of these, which is before the public. Let any man do the same for a fortnight, and publish it; and if, after that, he should find himself so disposed, let him 'cast a stone.' At that hour when the failings of all shall be made manifest, the attention of each individual will be confined to his own.

"It is not merely the name of Johnson that is to do service to any cause. It is his genius, his learning, his good sense, the strength of his reasonings, and the happiness of his illustrations. These all are precisely what they were; once good, and always good. His arguments in favour of self-denial do not lose their force because he fasted, nor those in favour of devotion because he said his prayers. Grant his failings were, if possible, still greater than these; will a man refuse to be guided by the sound opinion of a counsel, or resist the salutary prescription of a physician, because they who give them are not without their faults? A man may do so, but he will never be accounted a wise man for doing it.

"Johnson, it is said, was superstitious. But who shall exactly ascertain to us what superstition is? The Romanist is charged with it by the church of England man; the churchman by the presbyterian, the presbyterian by the independent, all by the deist, and the deist by the atheist. With some it is superstitious to pray; with others to receive the sacrament; with others to believe in God. In some minds it springs from the most amiable disposition in the world—'a pious awe, and fear to have offended;' a wish rather to do too much than too little. Such a disposition one loves, and wishes always to find in a friend; and it cannot be disagreeable in the sight of him who made us. It argues a sensibility of heart, a tenderness of conscience, and the fear of God. Let him who finds it not in himself beware, lest in flying from superstition he fall into irreligion and profaneness.

"That persons of eminent talents and attainments in literature have been often complained of as dogmatical, boisterous, and inattentive to the rules of good breeding, is well known. But let us not expect every thing from any man. There was no occasion that Johnson should teach us to dance, to make bows or turn compliments; he could teach us better things. To reject wisdom because the person of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant,—what is it but to throw away a pineapple, and assign for a reason the roughness of its coat? Who quarrels with a botanist for not being an astronomer? or with a moralist for not being a mathematician? As it is said, in concerns of a much higher nature, 'Every man hath his gift—one after this manner, and another after that.' It is our business to profit by all, and to learn of each that in which each is best qualified to instruct us.

"That Johnson was generous and charitable, none can deny. But he was not always judicious in the selection of his objects: distress was a sufficient recommendation; and he did not scrutinize into the failings of the distressed. May it be always my lot to have such a benefactor! Some are so nice in a scrutiny of this kind that they can never find any proper objects of their benevolence, and are necessitated to save their money. It should doubtless be distributed in the best manner we are able to distribute it; but what would become of us all, if he on whose bounty all depend should be extreme to mark that which is done amiss?

"It is hard to judge any man, without a due consideration of all circumstances. Here were stupendous abilities and suitable attainments; but then here were hereditary disorders of body and mind reciprocally aggravating each other—a scrofulous frame, and a melancholy temper: here was a life, the greater part of which passed in making provision for the day, under the pressure of poverty and sickness, sorrow and anguish. So far to gain the ascendant over these as to do what Johnson did, required very great strength of mind indeed. Who can say that, in a like situation, he should long have possessed or been able to exert it?

"From the mixture of power and weakness in the composition of this wonderful man, the scholar should learn humility. It was designed to correct that pride which great parts and great learning are apt to produce in their possessor. In him it had the desired effect. For though consciousness of superiority might sometimes induce him to

carry it high with man (and even this was much abated in the latter part of life), his devotions have shown to the whole world how humbly he walked at all times with his God.

"His example may likewise encourage those of timid and gloomy dispositions not to despond, when they reflect that the vigour of such an intellect could not preserve its possessor from the depredations of melancholy. They will cease to be surprised and alarmed at the degree of their own sufferings: they will resolve to bear with patience and resignation the malady to which they find a Johnson subject as well as themselves: and if they want words in which to ask relief from him who alone can give it, the God of mercy and Father of all comfort, language affords no finer than those in which his prayers are conceived. Child of sorrow, whoever thou art, use them; and be thankful that the man existed by whose means thou hast them to use.

"His eminence and his fame must of course have excited envy and malice; but let envy and malice look at his infirmities and his charities, and they will quickly melt into pity and love.

"That he should not be conscious of the abilities with which Providence had blessed him was impossible. He felt his own powers; he felt what he was capable of having performed; and he saw how little, comparatively speaking, he had performed. Hence his apprehensions on the near prospect of the account to be made, viewed through the medium of constitutional and morbid melancholy, which often excluded from his sight the bright beams of divine mercy. May those beams ever shine upon us! But let them not cause us to forget that talents have been bestowed of which an account must be rendered, and that the fate of the 'unprofitable servant' may justly beget apprehensions in the stoutest mind. The indolent man who is without such apprehensions has never yet considered the subject as he ought. For one person who fears death too much, there are a thousand who do not fear it enough, nor have thought in earnest about it. Let us only put in practice the duty of self-examination; let us inquire into the success we have experienced in our war against the passions, or even against undue indulgence of the common appetites—eating, drinking, and sleeping; we shall soon perceive how much more easy it is to form resolutions than to execute them, and shall no longer find occasion, perhaps, to wonder at the weakness of Johnson.

"On the whole, in the memoirs of him that have been published, there are so many witty sayings and so many wise ones, by which the world, if it so please, may be at once entertained and improved, that I do not regret their publication. In this, as in all other instances, we are to adopt the good and reject the evil. The little stories of his oddities and his infirmities in common life will, after a while, be overlooked and forgotten; but his writings will live for ever, still more and more studied and admired, while Britons shall continue to be characterized by a love of elegance and sublimity, of good sense and virtue. The sincerity of his repentance, the steadfastness of his faith, and the fervour of his charity, forbid us to doubt, that his sun set in clouds to rise without them: and of this let us always be mindful, that every one who is made better by his books will add a wreath to his crown."

VIII.

[Diary of Dr. Johnson's last illness, by J. Hoole, Esq.—*referred to ante*, p. 436.]

"Saturday, Nov. 20, 1784.—This evening, about eight o'clock, I paid a visit to my dear friend Dr. Johnson, whom I found very ill and in great dejection of spirits. We had a most affecting conversation on the subject of religion, in which he exhorted me, with the greatest warmth of kindness, to attend closely to every religious duty, and particularly enforced the obligation of private prayer and receiving the sacrament. He desired me to stay that night and join in prayer with him; adding, that he always went to prayer every night with his man Francis. He conjured me to read and meditate upon the Bible, and not to throw it aside for a play or a novel. He said he had himself lived in great negligence of religion and worship for forty years; that he had neglected to read his Bible, and had often reflected what he could hereafter say when he should be asked why he had not read it. He begged me repeatedly to let his present situation have due effect upon me, and advised me, when I got home, to note down in writing what had passed between us, adding, that what a man writes in that manner dwells upon his mind. He said many things that I cannot now recollect, but all delivered with the utmost fervour of religious zeal and personal affection. Between nine and ten o'clock his servant Francis came up stairs: he then said we would all go to prayers, and, desiring me to kneel down by his bed-side, he repeated several prayers with great devotion. I then took my leave. He then pressed me to think of all he had said, and to commit it to writing. I assured him I would. He seized my hand with much warmth, and repeated, 'Promise me you will do it:' on which we parted, and I engaged to see him the next day. Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 153.

"Sunday, Nov. 21.—About noon I again visited him: found him rather better and easier, his spirits more raised, and his conversation more disposed to general subjects. When I came in, he asked if I had done what he desired (meaning the noting down what passed the night before); and upon my saying that I had, he pressed my hand, and said earnestly, 'Thank you.' Our discourse then grew more cheerful. He told me, with apparent pleasure, that he heard the Empress of Russia had ordered the Rambler to be translated into the Russian language, and that a copy would be sent him. Before we parted, he put into my hands a little book, by Fleetwood, on the sacrament, which he told me he had been the means of introducing to the University of Oxford by recommending it to a young student there.

"Monday, Nov. 22.—Visited the Doctor: found him seemingly better of his complaints, but extremely low and dejected. I sat by him till

he fell asleep, and soon after left him, as he seemed little disposed to talk; and, on my going away, he said emphatically, 'I am very poorly ndeed!'

"Tuesday, Nov. 23.—Called about eleven: the Doctor not up: Mr.[1] Gardiner in the dining-room: the Doctor soon came to us, and seemed more cheerful than the day before. He spoke of his design to invite a Mrs. Hall[2] to be with him, and to offer her Mrs. Williams's room. Called again about three: found him quite oppressed with company that morning, therefore left him directly.

"Wednesday, Nov. 24.—Called about seven in the evening: found him very ill and very low indeed. He said a thought had struck him that his rapid decline of health and strength might be partly owing to the town air, and spoke of getting a lodging at Islington. I sat with him till past nine, and then took my leave.

"Thursday, Nov. 25.—About three in the afternoon was told that he had desired that day to see no company. In the evening, about eight, called with Mr. Nicol[3], and, to our great surprise, we found him then setting out for Islington, to the Rev. Mr. Strahan's. He could scarce speak. We went with him down the court to the coach. He was accompanied by his servant Frank and Mr. Lowe the painter. I offered myself to go with him, but he declined it.

"Friday, Nov. 26.—Called at his house about eleven: heard he was much better, and had a better night than he had known a great while, and was expected home that day. Called again in the afternoon—not so well as he was, nor expected home that night.

"Saturday, Nov. 27.—Called again about noon: heard he was much worse: went immediately to Islington, where I found him extremely bad, and scarce able to speak, with the asthma. Sir John Hawkins, the Rev. Mr. Strahan, and Mrs. Strahan, were with him. Observing that we said little, he desired that we would not constrain ourselves, though he was not able to talk with us. Soon after he said he had something to say to Sir John Hawkins, on which we immediately went down into the parlour. Sir John soon followed us, and said he had been speaking about his will. Sir John started the idea of proposing to him to make it on the spot, that Sir John should dictate it, and that I should write it. He went up to propose it, and soon came down with the Doctor's acceptance. The will was then begun; but before we proceeded far, it being necessary, on account of some alteration, to begin again, Sir John asked the Doctor whether he would choose to make any introductory declaration respecting his faith. The Doctor said he would. Sir John further asked if he would make any declaration of his being of the church of England: to which the Doctor said '*No!*' but, taking a pen, he wrote on a paper the following words, which he delivered to Sir John, desiring him to keep it: 'I commit to the infinite mercies of Almighty God my soul, polluted with many sins; but purified, I trust, with repentance and the death of Jesus Christ.' While he was at Mr. Strahan's, Dr. Brocklesby came in, and Dr. Johnson put the question to him, whether he thought he could live six weeks? to which Dr. Brocklesby returned a very doubtful answer, and soon left us. After dinner the will was finished, and about six we came to town in Sir John Hawkins's carriage; Sir John, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Ryland (who came in after dinner), and myself. The Doctor appeared much better in the way home, and talked pretty cheerfully. Sir John took leave of us at the end of Bolt-court, and Mr. Ryland and myself went to his house with the Doctor, who began to grow very ill again. Mr. Ryland soon left us, and I remained with the Doctor till Mr. Sastres came in. We staid with him about an hour, when we left him on his saying he had some business to do. Mr. Sastres and myself went together homewards, discoursing on the dangerous state of our friend, when it was resolved that Mr. Sastres should write to Dr. Heberden; but going to his house that night, he fortunately found him at home, and he promised to be with Dr. Johnson next morning.

"Sunday, Nov. 28.—Went to Dr. Johnson's about two o'clock: met Mrs. Hoole coming from thence, as he was asleep: took her back with me: found Sir John Hawkins with him. The Doctor's conversation tolerably cheerful. Sir John reminded him that he had expressed a desire to leave some small memorials to his friends, particularly a Polyglot Bible to Mr. Langton; and asked if they should add the codicil then. The Doctor replied, 'he had forty things to add, but could not do it at that time.' Sir John then took his leave. Mr. Sastres came next into the dining-room, where I was with Mrs. Hoole. Dr. Johnson hearing that Mrs. Hoole was in the next room, desired to see her. He received her with great affection, took her by the hand, and said nearly these words: 'I feel great tenderness for you: think of the situation in which you see me, profit by it, and God Almighty keep you for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.' He then asked if we would both stay and dine with him. Mrs. Hoole said she could not; but I agreed to stay. Upon my saying to the Doctor that Dr. Heberden would be with him that morning, his answer was, 'God has called me, and Dr. Heberden comes too late.' Soon after this Dr. Heberden came. While he was there, we heard them, from the other room, in earnest discourse, and found that they were talking over the affair[4] of the K—g and C———n[5]. We overheard Dr. Heberden say, 'All you did was extremely proper.' After Dr. Heberden was gone, Mr. Sastres and I returned into the chamber. Dr. Johnson complained that sleep this day had powerful dominion over him, that he waked with great difficulty, and that probably he should go off in one of these paroxysms. Afterwards he said that he hoped his sleep was the effect of opium taken some days before, which might not be worked off. We dined

1 [No doubt an error of the press for *Mrs.* Gardiner.—Ed.]

2 [See *ante*, p. 291.—Ed.]

3 Mr George Nicol, of Pall Mall.—J. Hoole.

4 This alludes to an application made for an increase to his pension, to enable him to go to Italy.—J. Hoole.

5 [*Sic*; but probably an error of the press for C———r meaning the King and Lord Chancellor: see *ante*, p. 413 —Ed.]

together- -the Doctor, Mr. Sastres, Mrs. Davies, and myself. He ate a pretty good dinner with seeming appetite, but appearing rather impatient, and being asked unnecessary and frivolous questions, he said he often thought of Macbeth,—'Question enrages him.' He retired immediately after dinner, and we soon went, at his desire (Mr. Sastres and myself), and sat with him till tea. He said little, but dosed at times. At six he ordered tea for us, and we went out to drink it with Mrs. Davies; but the Doctor drank none. The Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Ashburne, came soon after; and Dr. Johnson desired our attendance at prayers, which were read by Dr. Taylor. Mr. Ryland came and sat some time with him: he thought him much better. Mr. Sastres and I continued with him the remainder of the evening, when he exhorted Mr. Sastres in nearly these words: 'There is no one who has shown me more attention than you have done, and it is now right you should claim some attention from me. You are a young man, and are to struggle through life: you are in a profession that I dare say you will exercise with great fidelity and innocence; but let me exhort you always to think of my situation, which must one day be yours: always remember that life is short, and that eternity never ends! I say nothing of your religion; for if you conscientiously keep to it, I have little doubt but you may be saved: if you read the controversy, I think we have the right on our side; but if you do not read it, be not persuaded, from any worldly consideration, to alter the religion in which you were educated: change not, but from conviction of reason.' He then most strongly enforced the motives of virtue and piety from the consideration of a future state of reward and punishment, and concluded with, 'Remember all this, and God bless you! Write down what I have said—I think you are the third person I have bid do this [1].' At ten o'clock he dismissed us, thanking us for a visit which he said could not have been very pleasant to us.

"Monday, Nov. 29.—Called with my son about eleven: saw the Doctor, who said, 'You must not now stay;' but as we were going away, he said, 'I will get Mr. Hoole to come next Wednesday and read the Litany to me, and do you and Mrs. Hoole come with him.' He appeared very ill. Returning from the city I called again to inquire, and heard that Dr. Butter was with him. In the evening, about eight, called again and just saw him; but did not stay, as Mr. Langton was with him on business. I met Sir Joshua Reynolds going away.

"Tuesday, Nov. 30.—Called twice this morning, but did not see him: he was much the same. In the evening, between six and seven, went to his house: found there Mr. Langton, Mr. Sastres, and Mr. Ryland: the Doctor being asleep in the chamber, we went all to tea and coffee, when the Doctor came in to us rather cheerful, and entering said, 'Dear gentlemen, how do you do?' He drank coffee, and, in the course of the conversation, said that he recollected a poem of his, made some years ago on a young gentleman coming of age. He repeated the whole with great spirit: it consisted of about fifteen or sixteen stanzas of four lines, in alternate rhyme. He said he had only repeated it once since he composed it, and that he never gave but one copy. He said several excellent things that evening, and among the rest, that 'scruples made many men miserable, but few men good.' He spoke of the affectation that men had to accuse themselves of petty faults or weaknesses, in order to exalt themselves into notice for any extraordinary talents which they might possess; and instanced in Waller, which he said he would record if he lived to revise his life. Waller was accustomed to say that his memory was so bad he would sometimes forget to repeat his grace at table, or the Lord's prayer, perhaps that people might wonder at what he did else of great moment; for the Doctor observed, that no man takes upon himself small blemishes without supposing that great abilities are attributed to him; and that, in short, this affectation of candour or modesty was but another kind of indirect self-praise, and had its foundation in vanity. Frank bringing him a note, as he opened it he said an odd thought struck him, that 'one should receive no letters in the grave [2].' His talk was in general very serious and devout, though occasionally cheerful: he said, 'You are all serious men, and I will tell you something. About two years since I feared that I had neglected God, and that then I had not a *mind* to give him; on which I set about to read Thomas à Kempis in Low Dutch, which I accomplished, and thence I judged that my mind was not impaired, Low Dutch having no affinity with any of the languages which I knew.' With respect to his recovery, he seemed to think it hopeless. There was to be a consultation of physicians next day: he wished to have his legs scarified, to let out the water; but this his medical friends opposed, and he submitted to their opinion, though he said he was not satisfied. At half past eight he dismissed us all but Mr. Langton. I first asked him if my son should attend him next day, to read the Litany, as he had desired; but he declined it on account of the expected consultation. We went away, leaving Mr. Langton and Mr. Desmoulins, a young man who was employed in copying his Latin epigrams.

"Wednesday, Dec. 1.—At his house in the evening: drank tea and coffee with Mr. Sastres, Mr. Desmoulins, and Mr. [3] Hall: went into the Doctor's chamber after tea, when he gave me an epitaph to copy, written by him for his father, mother, and brother. He continued much the same.

"Thursday, Dec. 2.—Called in the morning and left the epitaph: with him in the evening about seven; found Mr. Langton and Mr. Desmoulins; did not see the Doctor; he was in his chamber, and afterwards engaged with Dr. Scott.

"Friday, Dec. 3.—Called; but he wished not to see any body. Consultation of physicians to be held that day: called again in the evening; found Mr. Langton with him; Mr. Sastres and I went together into his chamber; he was extreme-

1 The other two were Dr. Brocklesby and myself.—J. Hoole

2 This note was from Mr. Davies the bookseller, and mentioned a present of some pork; upon which the Doctor said, in a manner that seemed as if he thought it ill timed, "Too much of this," or some such expression. —J. Hoole.

3 [Probably a mistake for *Mrs* Hall.—Ed.]

ly low. 'I am very bad indeed, dear gentlemen,' he said; 'very bad, very low, very cold, and I think I find my life to fail. In about a quarter of an hour he dismissed Mr. Sastres and me; but called me back again, and said that next Sunday, if he lived, he designed to take the sacrament, and wished me, my wife, and son to be there. We left Mr. Langton with him.

"Saturday, Dec. 4.—Called on him about three: he was much the same, did not see him, he had much company that day. Called in the evening with Mr. Sastres about eight; found he was not disposed for company; Mr. Langton with him; did not see him.

"Sunday, Dec. 5.—Went to Bolt-court with Mrs. Hoole after eleven; found there Sir John Hawkins, Rev. Mr. Strahan, Mrs. Gardiner, and Mr. Desmoulins, in the dining-room. After some time the Doctor came to us from the chamber, and saluted us all, thanking us all for this visit to him. He said he found himself very bad, but hoped he should go well through the duty which he was about to do. The sacrament was then administered to all present, Frank being of the number. The Doctor repeatedly desired Mr. Strahan to speak louder; seeming very anxious not to lose any part of the service, in which he joined in very great fervour of devotion. The service over, he again thanked us all for attending him on the occasion: he said he had taken some opium to enable him to support the fatigue; he seemed quite spent, and lay in his chair some time in a kind of doze: he then got up and retired into his chamber. Mr. Ryland then called on him. I was with them: he said to Mr. Ryland, 'I have taken my viaticum: I hope I shall arrive safe at the end of my journey, and be accepted at last.' He spoke very despondingly several times: Mr. Ryland comforted him, observing that 'we had great hopes given us.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'we have hopes given us; but they are conditional, and I know not how far I have fulfilled these conditions[1].' He afterwards said, 'However, I think that I have now corrected all bad and vicious habits.' Sir Joshua Reynolds called on him: we left them together. Sir Joshua being gone, he called Mr. Ryland and me again to him: he continued talking very seriously, and repeated a prayer or collect with great fervour, when Mr. Ryland took his leave. He ate a tolerable dinner, but retired directly after dinner. My son came to us from his church: we were at dinner—Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Gardiner, myself, Mrs. Hoole, my son, and Mr. Desmoulins. He had looked out a sermon of Dr. Clarke's, 'On the Shortness of Life,' for me to read to him after dinner, but he was too ill to hear it. After six o'clock he called us all into his room, when he dismissed us for that night with a prayer, delivered as he sat in his great chair, in the most fervent and affecting manner, his mind appearing wholly employed with the thoughts of another life. He told Mr. Ryland that he wished not to come to God with opium, but that he hoped he had been properly attentive. He said before us all, that when he recovered the last spring, he had only called it a *reprieve*, but that he did think it was for a longer time; however he hoped the time that had been prolonged to him might be the means of bringing forth fruit meet for repentance.

"Monday, Dec. 6.—Sent in the morning to make inquiry after him: he was much the same: called in the evening; found Mr. Cruikshanks the surgeon with him: he said he had been that day quarrelling with all his physicians: he appeared in tolerable spirits.

"Tuesday, Dec. 7.—Called at dinner-time: saw him eat a very good dinner: he seemed rather better, and in spirits.

"Wednesday, Dec. 8.—Went with Mrs. Hoole and my son, by appointment; found him very poorly and low, after a very bad night. Mr. Nichols the printer was there. My son read the Litany, the Doctor several times urging him to speak louder. After prayers Mr. Langton came in: much serious discourse: he warned us all to profit by his situation; and, applying to me, who stood next him, exhorted me to lead a better life than he had done. 'A better life than you, my dear sir!' I repeated. He replied warmly, 'Don't compliment now.' He told Mr. Langton that he had the night before enforced on [2]——— a powerful argument to a powerful objection against Christianity.

"He had often thought it might seem strange that the Jews, who refused belief to the doctrine supported by the miracles of our Saviour, should after his death raise a numerous church; but he said that they expected fully a temporal prince, and with this idea the multitude was actuated when they strewed his way with palm-branches on his entry into Jerusalem; but finding their expectations afterwards disappointed, rejected him, till in process of time, comparing all the circumstances and prophecies of the Old Testament, confirmed in the New, many were converted; that the Apostles themselves once believed him to be a temporal prince. He said that he had always been struck with the resemblance of the Jewish passover and the christian doctrine of redemption. He thanked us all for our attendance, and we left him with Mr. Langton.

"Thursday, Dec. 9.—Called in the evening; did not see him, as he was engaged.

"Friday, Dec. 10.—Called about eleven in the morning; saw Mr. La Trobe [3] there: neither of us saw the Doctor, as we understood he wished not to be visited that day. In the evening I sent him a letter, recommending Dr. Dalloway (an irregular physician) as an extraordinary person for curing the dropsy. He returned me a verbal answer that he was obliged to me, but that it was too late. My son read prayers with him this day.

"Saturday, Dec. 11.—Went to Bolt-court about twelve; met there Dr. Burney, Dr. Taylor, Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Sastres, Mr. Paradise, Count Zenobia, and Mr. Langton. Mrs. Hoole called for me there: we both went to him: he received us very kindly; told me he had my letter, but 'it was too late for doctors, *regular* or *irregular*.' His physicians had been with him

1 See his letter to Mrs. Thrale, vol. i. p. 361.—J. Hoole.

2 [Probably Mr. Windham; see his Journal. The word *He* in the next sentence means not Mr. Windham, but Dr. Johnson.—Ed.]

3 [See *ante*, p. 438, note.—Ed.]

that day, but prescribed nothing. Mr. Cruikshanks came: the Doctor was rather cheerful with him; he said, 'Come, give me your hand,' and shook him by the hand, adding, 'You shall make no other use of it now;' meaning he should not examine his legs. Mr. Cruikshanks wished to do it, but the Doctor would not let him. Mr. Cruikshanks said he would call in the evening.

"Sunday, Dec. 12.—Was not at Bolt-court in the forenoon; at St. Sepulchre's school in the evening with Mrs. Hoole, where we saw Mrs. Gardiner and Lady Rothes; heard that Dr. Johnson was very bad, and had been something delirious. Went to Bolt-court about nine, and found there Mr. Windham and the Rev. Mr. Strahan. The Doctor was then very bad in bed, which I think he had only taken to that day: he had now refused to take any more medicine or food. Mr. Cruikshanks came about eleven: he endeavoured to persuade him to take some nourishment, but in vain. Mr. Windham then went again to him, and, by the advice of Mr. Cruikshanks, put it upon this footing—that by persisting to refuse all sustenance he might probably defeat his own purpose *to preserve his mind clear*, as his weakness might bring on paralytic complaints that might affect his mental powers. The Doctor, Mr. Windham said, heard him patiently; but when he had heard all, he desired to be troubled no more. He then took a most affectionate leave of Mr. Windham, who reported to us the issue of the conversation, for only Mr. Desmoulins was with them in the chamber. I did not see the Doctor that day, being fearful of disturbing him, and never conversed with him again. I came away about half past eleven with Mr. Windham.

"Monday, Dec. 13.—Went to Bolt-court at eleven o'clock in the morning; met a young lady coming down stairs from the Doctor, whom, upon inquiry, I found to be Miss Morris (a sister to Miss Morris [1], formerly on the stage). Mrs. Desmoulins told me that she had seen the Doctor; that by her desire he had been told she came to ask his blessing, and that he said, 'God bless you!' I then went up into his chamber, and found him lying very composed in a kind of doze: he spoke to nobody. Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Langton, Mrs. Gardiner, Rev. Mr. Strahan and Mrs. Strahan, Doctors Brocklesby and Butter, Mr. Steevens, and Mr. Nichols the printer, came; but no one chose to disturb him by speaking to him, and he seemed to take no notice of any person. While Mrs. Gardiner and I were there, before the rest came, he took a little warm milk in a cup, when he said something upon its not being properly given into his hand: he breathed very regular, though short, and appeared to be mostly in a calm sleep or dozing. I left him in this state, and never more saw him alive. In the evening I supped with Mrs. Hoole and my son at Mr. Braithwaite's, and at night my servant brought me word that my dearest friend died that evening about seven o'clock; and next morning I went to the house, where I met Mr. Seward: we went together into the chamber, and there saw the most awful sight of Dr. Johnson laid out in his bed, without life!

"JOHN HOOLE."

[1] As there have been several Miss Morris's on the stage, it may be proper to mention that the young lady was sister to Miss Morris, who appeared in Juliet at Covent Garden, Nov. 26, 1768, and died May 1, 1769. She was related to Corbyn Morris, Esq. commissioner of the customs.—J. HOOLE.

IX.

[SOME account of FRANCIS STUART,—*referred to in* vol. i. p. 75; and *ante*, pp. 225. 228. 369. 371.

"*In that amusing scrap-book called "Grose's Olio," there is an imputation against Dr. Johnson of having obtained an advance of money from the publishers of the Dictionary, by the trick of substituting old sheets instead of new copy, which he had neglected to prepare. The following extract from the* Gentleman's Magazine *contradicts this imputation; but for* that *sole purpose the Editor would not have thought it necessary to quote it, but he is induced to do so because it also affords some curious particulars as to the practical compilation of the Dictionary, and gives some account of Francis Stuart, whose connexion with Johnson seems to the Editor to have been more important than Mr. Boswell supposed. Indeed Mr. Boswell's account of the little negotiation in which Dr. Johnson employed him with Stuart's sister is very confused. In December,* 1779, *he states that he had, as desired by Johnson,* "discovered the sister of Stuart, and given her a guinea for an old pocket-book of her brother's which Dr. Johnson had retained; that the woman wondered at his scrupulous honesty, and received the guinea as if sent by Providence:" *ante*, p 225. *But this must have been a total mistake on the part of Boswell; for it appears that the sister* had *the pocket-book, or letter-case, and that it was for obtaining it that Johnson offered the guinea. This matter was probably explained in some letters not now extant; for in April,* 1780 (*ante*, p. 228), *Johnson expresses* "satisfaction at the success of Boswell's transaction with Mrs. Stuart," *by which it may be inferred that Boswell had obtained the letter-case from her; but the negotiation was not terminated; for four years after, in* 1784 (*ante*, p. 369), *Johnson writes to Boswell,* "I desire you to see Mrs. Stewart once again, and say that in the letter-case was *a letter relating to me*, for which I will give her, if she is willing to give it to me, another guinea: the letter *is of consequence* only to me:"—*and again, 18th March,* 1784, "If you come hither through Edinburgh, send for Mrs. Stewart, and give another guinea for *the letter in the old case*, to which I shall not be satisfied with my claim till she gives it me." (*Ante*, p. 371.) *The reader now sees that the retention by Johnson of Stewart's old pocket-book, and the scrupulous honesty of paying a guinea for it, was a misapprehension; and that Johnson really wanted to obtain the pocket-book, which he did get, for the* sake of a letter *it contained, which he seems not to have gotten; but what letter could this be* of consequence *to Dr. Johnson, when on the verge of the grave, yet so long neglected by him; for Stewart had been*

lead many years? Mr. Boswell's original error and his subsequent silence on the subject is very strange. The Editor is satisfied either that Mr. Boswell did not obtain the letter, or that it related to some circumstance of Johnson's life which he did not choose to divulge; and what could it have been that he *would not have told?*—Ed.]

Gent. Mag. vol. lxix. p. 1171.

"This Steward was Francis Stuart. He was the son of a shop-keeper, in Edinburgh, and was brought up to the law. For several years he was employed as a writer in some of the principal offices of Edinburgh; and being a man of good natural parts, and given to literature, he frequently assisted in digesting and arranging MSS. for the press; and, among other employments of this sort, he used to boast of assisting or copying some of the juvenile productions of the afterwards celebrated Lord Kaimes when he was very young and a correspondent with the Edinburgh Magazine. When he came to London, he stuck more closely to the press; and in this walk of copying or arranging for the press, he got recommended to Dr. Johnson, who then lived in Gough-square. Frank was a great admirer of the Doctor, and upon all occasions consulted him; and the Doctor had also a very respectable opinion of his amanuensis Frank Stuart, as he always familiarly called him. But it was not only in collecting authorities that Frank was employed: he was the man who did every thing in the writing way for him, and managed all his affairs between the Doctor, his bookseller, and his creditors, who were then often very troublesome, and every species of business the Doctor had to do out of doors; and for this he was much better qualified than the Doctor himself, as he had been more accustomed to common business, and more conversant in the ways of men.

"That he was a porter-drinking man, as Captain Grose says, may be admitted; for he usually spent his evenings at the Bible, in Shirelane, a house of call for bookbinders and printers, where Frank was in good esteem among some creditable neighbours that frequented the back-room; for, except his fuddling, he was a very worthy character. But his drinking and conviviality, he used to say, he left behind him at Edinburgh, where he had connected himself with some jovial wits and great card-players, which made his journey to London very prudent and necessary, as nothing out such a measure could break off the connexion, or bring them to good hours and moderation. In one of those night rambles, Stuart and his companions met with the mob-procession when they were conducting Captain Porteus to be hanged; and Stuart and his companions were next day examined about it before the town-council, when (as Stuart used to say) 'we were found to be too drunk to have had any hand in the business.' But he gave a most accurate and particular account of that memorable transaction in the Edinburgh Magazine of that time, which he was rather fond of relating.

"In another walk, besides collecting authorities, he was remarkably useful to Dr. Johnson; that was, in the explanation of low cant phrases, which the Doctor used to get Frank to give his explanation of first; and all words relating to gambling and card-playing, such as *All Fours, Catch honours, Cribbage*, &c. were, among the typos, said to be Frank Stuart's, corrected by the Doctor, for which he received a second payment. At the time this happened, the Dictionary was going on printing very briskly in three departments, letter D, G, and L, being at work upon at the same time; and as the Doctor was in the printing-house phrase, *out of town*—that is, had received more money than he had produced MS. for—the proprietors restricted him in his payments, and would answer no more demands from him than at the rate of a guinea for every sheet of MS. copy he delivered; which was paid him by Mr. Strahan on delivery; and the Doctor readily agreed to this. The copy was written upon 4to. post, and in two columns each page. The Doctor wrote, in his own hand, the words and their explanation, and generally two or three words in each column, leaving a space between each for the authorities, which were pasted on as they were collected by the different clerks or amanuenses employed: and in this mode the MS. was so regular, that the sheets of MS. which made a sheet of print could be very exactly ascertained. Every guinea parcel came after this agreement regularly tied up, and was put upon a shelf in the corrector's room till wanted. The MS. being then in great forwardness, the Doctor supplied copy faster than the printers called for it; and in one of the heaps of copy it happened that, upon giving it out to the compositors, some sheets of the old MS. that had been printed off were found among the new MS. paid for. It is more probable that this happened by the Doctor's keeping the old copy, which was always returned him with the proof, in a disorderly manner. But another mode of accounting for this was at that time very current in the printing-house. The Doctor, besides his old and constant assistant, Stuart, had several others, some of them not of the best characters; and one of this class had been lately discharged, whom the Doctor had been very kind to, notwithstanding all his loose and idle tricks; and it was generally supposed that he had fallen upon this expedient of picking up the old MS. to raise a few guineas, finding the money so readily paid on the MS. as he delivered it. But every body was inclined to acquit the Doctor, as he had been well known to have rather *too little thoughts about money matters.* And what served to complete the Doctor's acquittal was, Stuart immediately on the discovery supplying the *quantum* of right copy (for it was ready); which set every thing to rights, and that in the course of an hour or two, as the writer of this note can truly assert, as he was employed in the business.

"How such an erroneous and injurious account of an accident so fairly and justly to be accounted for, and the Doctor's character cleared from all imputation of art or guilt came to Captain Grose's ears, is hard to be accounted for: but it appears to have been picked up among the common gossip of the press-room, or other remote parts of the printing-house, where the right state of the fact could not be minutely related nor accurately known."

X.

LESSON IN BIOGRAPHY;

Or How to write the Life of one's Friend. *An Extract from the* Life of Dr. Pozz, *in ten volumes folio, written by* James Bozz, *Esq. who* flourished *with him near fifty years.*

[By A. Chalmers, Esq.]

Referred to ante, p. 456.

Among the numerous parodies and jeux d'esprit *which Mr. Boswell's work produced, the following pleasantry from the pen of Mr. Alexander Chalmers, which appeared in the periodical publications of the day, is worth preserving; for it is not merely a good pleasantry, but a fair criticism of some of the lighter parts of the work.*—Ed.]

"We dined at the chop-house. Dr. Pozz was this day very instructive. We talked of books. I mentioned the *History of Tommy Trip*. I said it was a great work. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, it is a great work; but, sir, it is a great work relatively; it was a great work to you when you was a little boy: but now, sir, you are a great man, and Tommy Trip is a little boy.' I felt somewhat hurt at this comparison, and I believe he perceived it; for, as he was squeezing a lemon, he said, 'Never be affronted at a comparison. I have been compared to many things, but I never was affronted. No, sir, if they would call *me* a dog, and *you* a canister tied to my tail, I would not be affronted.'

"Cheered by this kind of mention of me, though in such a situation, I asked him what he thought of a friend of ours, who was always making comparisons. Pozz. 'Sir, that fellow has a simile for every thing but himself. I knew him when he kept a shop: he then made money, sir, and now he makes comparisons. Sir, he would say that you and I were two figs stuck together; two figs in adhesion, sir; and then he would laugh.' Bozz. 'But have not some great writers determined that *comparisons* are now and then *odious?*' Pozz. 'No, sir, not odious in themselves, not odious as comparisons; the fellows who make them are odious. The whigs make comparisons.'

"We supped that evening at his house. I showed him some lines I had made upon a pair of breeches. Pozz. 'Sir, the lines are good; but where could you find such a subject in your country?' Bozz. 'Therefore it is a proof of invention, which is characteristic of poetry.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, but an invention which few of your countrymen can enjoy.' I reflected afterwards on the depth of this remark: it affords a proof of that acuteness which he displayed in every branch of literature. I asked him if he approved of green spectacles? Pozz. 'As to green spectacles, sir, the question seems to be this: if I wore green spectacles, it would be because they assisted vision, or because I liked them. Now, sir, if a man tells me he does not like green spectacles, and that they hurt his eyes, I would not compel him to wear them. No, sir, I would dissuade him.' A few months after, I consulted him again on this subject, and he honoured me with a letter, in which he gave the same opinion. It will be found in its proper place, vol. vi. p. 2789. I have thought much on this subject, and must confess that in such matters a man ought to be a free moral agent.

"Next day I left town, and was absent for six weeks, three days, and seven hours, as I find by a memorandum in my journal. In this time I had only one letter from him, which is as follows:—

"'To James Bozz, Esq.

"'Dear sir,—My bowels have been very bad. Pray buy me some Turkey rhubarb, and bring with you a copy of your *Tour*.

"'Write to me soon, and write to me often I am, dear sir, yours, affectionately.

"'Sam. Pozz.'

"It would have been unpardonable to have omitted a letter like this, in which we see so much of his great and illuminated mind. On my return to town, we met again at the chop-house. We had much conversation to-day: his wit flashed like lightning; indeed, there is not one hour of my present life in which I do not profit by some of his valuable communications.

"We talked of *wind*. I said I knew many persons much distressed with that complaint. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, when confined, when pent up.' I said I did not know that, but I questioned if the Romans ever knew it. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, the Romans knew it.' Bozz. 'Livy does not mention it.' Pozz. 'No, sir, Livy wrote History. Livy was not writing the Life of a Friend.'

"On medical subjects his knowledge was immense. He told me of a friend of ours who had just been attacked by a most dreadful complaint: he had entirely lost the use of his limbs, so that he could neither stand nor walk, unless supported; his speech was quite gone; his eyes were much swollen, and every vein distended, yet his face was rather pale, and his extremities cold; his pulse beat 160 in a minute. I said, with tenderness, that I would go and see him; and, said I, 'Sir, I will take Dr. Bolus with me.' Pozz. 'No, sir, don't go.' I was startled, for I knew his compassionate heart, and earnestly asked why? Pozz. 'Sir, you don't know his disorder.' Bozz. 'Pray what is it?' Pozz. 'Sir, the man is—*dead drunk!*' This explanation threw me into a violent fit of laughter, in which he joined me, rolling about as he used to do when he enjoyed a joke; but he afterwards checked me. Pozz. 'Sir, you ought not to laugh at what I said. Sir, he who laughs at what another man says, will soon learn to laugh at that other man. Sir, you should laugh only at your own jokes; you should laugh seldom.'

"We talked of a friend of ours who was a very violent politician. I said I did not like his company. Pozz. 'No, sir, he is not healthy; he is sore, sir; his mind is ulcerated; he has a political whitlow; sir, you cannot touch him without giving him pain. Sir, I would not talk politicks with that man; I would talk of cabbage and pease; sir, I would ask him how he got his corn in, and whether his wife was with child; but I would not talk politicks.' Bozz. 'But perhaps, sir, he would talk of nothing else.' Pozz. 'Then sir, it is plain what he would do.' On my very

earnestly inquiring what that was, Dr. Pozz answered, 'Sir, he would let it alone.'

"I mentioned a tradesman who had lately set up his coach. Pozz. 'He is right, sir; a man who would go on swimmingly cannot get too soon off his legs. That man keeps his coach. Now, sir, a coach is better than a chaise, sir,—it is better than a chariot.' Bozz. 'Why, sir?' Pozz. 'Sir, it will hold more.' I begged that he would repeat this, that I might remember it, and he complied with great good humour. 'Dr. Pozz,' said I, '*you* ought to keep a coach.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, I ought.' Bozz. 'But you do not, and that has often surprised me.' Pozz. 'Surprised you! There, sir, is another prejudice of absurdity. Sir, you ought to be surprised at nothing. A man that has lived half your days ought to be above all surprise. Sir, it is a rule with me never to be surprised. It is mere ignorance, you cannot guess why I do not keep a coach, and you are surprised. Now, sir, if you did know, you would not be surprised.' I said, tenderly, 'I hope, my dear sir, you will let me know before I leave town.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, you shall know now. You shall not go to Mr. Wilkins, and to Mr. Jenkins, and to Mr. Stubbs, and say, why does not Pozz keep a coach? I will tell you myself—Sir, I can't afford it.'

"We talked of drinking. I asked him whether, in the course of his long and valuable life, he had not known some men who drank more than they could bear? Pozz. 'Yes, sir; and then, sir, nobody could bear them. A man who is drunk, sir, is a very foolish fellow.' Bozz. 'But, sir, as the poet says, "he is devoid of all care."' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, he cares for nobody; he has none of the cares of life: he cannot be a merchant, sir, for he cannot write his name; he cannot be a politician, sir, for he cannot talk; he cannot be an artist, sir, for he cannot see; and yet, sir, there is science in drinking.' Bozz. 'I suppose you mean that a man ought to know what he drinks.' Pozz. 'No, sir, to know what one drinks is nothing; but the science consists of three parts. Now, sir, were I to drink wine, I should wish to know them all; I should wish to know when I had too little, when I had enough, and when I had too much. There is our friend, * * * * * * * (mentioning a gentleman of our acquaintance); he knows when he has too little, and when he has too much, but he knows not when he has enough. Now, sir, that is the science of drinking, to know when one has enough.'

"We talked this day on a variety of topics, but I find very few memorandums in my journal. On small beer, he said it was flatulent liquor. He disapproved of those who deny the utility of absolute power, and seemed to be offended with a friend of ours who would always have his eggs poached. Sign-posts, he observed, had degenerated within his memory; and he particularly found fault with the moral of the Beggar's Opera. I endeavoured to defend a work which had afforded me so much pleasure, but could not master that strength of mind with which he argued: and it was with great satisfaction that he communicated to me afterwards a method of curing corns by applying a piece of oiled silk. In the early history of the world, he preferred Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology; but as they gave employment to useful artisans, he did not dislike the large buckles then coming into use.

"Next day we dined at the Mitre. I mentioned spirits. Pozz. 'Sir, there is as much evidence for the existence of spirits as against it. You may not believe it, but you cannot deny it.' I told him that my great grandmother once saw a spirit. He asked me to relate it, which I did very minutely, while he listened with profound attention. When I mentioned that the spirit once appeared in the shape of a shoulder of mutton, and another time in that of a tea-pot, he interrupted me:—Pozz. 'There, sir, is the point; the evidence is good, but the scheme is defective in consistency. We cannot deny that the spirit appeared in these shapes; but then we cannot reconcile them. What has a tea-pot to do with a shoulder of mutton? Neither is it a terrific object. There is nothing contemporaneous. Sir, these are objects which are not seen at the same time, nor in the same place.' Bozz. 'I think, sir, that old women in general are used to see ghosts.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, and their conversation is full of the subject: I would have an old woman to record such conversations; their loquacity tends to minuteness.'

"We talked of a person who had a very bad character. Pozz. 'Sir, he is a scoundrel.' Bozz. 'I hate a scoundrel.' Pozz. 'There you are wrong: don't hate scoundrels. Scoundrels, sir, are useful. There are many things we cannot do without scoundrels. I would not choose to keep company with scoundrels, but something may be got from them.' Bozz. 'Are not scoundrels generally fools?' Pozz. 'No, sir, they are not. A scoundrel must be a clever fellow; he must know many things of which a fool is ignorant. Any man may be a fool. I think a good book might be made out of scoundrels. I would have a *Biographia Flagitiosa*, the *Lives of Eminent Scoundrels*, from the earliest accounts to the present day.' I mentioned hanging: I thought it a very awkward situation. Pozz. 'No, sir, hanging is not an awkward situation: it is proper, sir, that a man whose actions tend towards flagitious obliquity should appear perpendicular at last.' I told him that I had lately been in company with some gentlemen, every one of whom could recollect some friend or other who had been hanged. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, that is the easiest way. We know those who have been hanged; we can recollect that: but we cannot number those who deserve it; it would not be decorous, sir, in a mixed company. No, sir, that is one of the few things which we are compelled to *think*.'"

Our regard for literary property[1] *prevents our making a larger extract from the above important work. We have, however, we hope, given such passages as will tend to impress our readers with a high idea of this vast undertaking.*—Note by the author.

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1 [This alludes to the jealousy about copyright, which Mr. Boswell carried so far that he actually printed separately, and entered at Stationers' Hall, Johnson's Letter to Lord Chesterfield (vol. i. p. 112), and the Account of Johnson's Conversation with George III. at Buckingham House, (vol. i. p. 239) to prevent his rivals making use of them.—Ed.]

XI.

Mr. Boswell's Original Dedication of the "Tour to the Hebrides."

TO EDMOND MALONE, ESQ.

My dear sir,—In every narrative, whether historical or biographical, authenticity is of the utmost consequence. Of this I have been so firmly persuaded, that I inscribed a former work to that person who was the best judge of its truth. I need not tell you I mean General Paoli; who, after his great, though unsuccessful efforts to preserve the liberties of his country, has found an honourable asylum in Britain, where he has now lived many years the object of royal regard and private respect; and whom I cannot name without expressing my very grateful sense of the uniform kindness which he has been pleased to show me.

The friends of Dr. Johnson can best judge, from internal evidence, whether the numerous conversations which form the most valuable part of the ensuing pages are correctly related. To them, therefore, I wish to appeal, for the accuracy of the portrait here exhibited to the world.

As one of those who were intimately acquainted with him, you have a title to this address. You have obligingly taken the trouble to peruse the original manuscript of this "Tour," and can vouch for the strict fidelity of the present publication. Your literary alliance with our much lamented friend, in consequence of having undertaken to render one of his labours more complete, by your edition of Shakspeare, a work which I am confident will not disappoint the expectations of the publick, gives you another claim. But I have a still more powerful inducement to prefix your name to this volume, as it gives me an opportunity of letting the world know that I enjoy the honour and happiness of your friendship; and of thus publickly testifying the sincere regard with which I am, my dear sir, your very faithful and obedient servant, James Boswell.

London, 20th September, 1785.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

By correcting the errours of the press in the former edition, and some inaccuracies for which the authour alone is answerable, and by supplying some additional notes, I have endeavoured to render this work more deserving of the very high honour which the publick has been pleased to show it—the whole of the first impression having been sold in a few weeks. J. B.

London, 20th December, 1785.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD EDITION.

Animated by the very favourable reception which two large impressions of this work have had, it has been my study to make it as perfect as I could in this edition, by correcting some inaccuracies which I discovered myself, and some which the kindness of friends or the scrutiny of adversaries pointed out. A few notes are added, of which the principal object is, to refute misrepresentation and calumny.

To the animadversions in the periodical journals of criticism, and in the numerous publications to which my book has given rise, I have made no answer. Every work must stand or fall by its own merit. I cannot, however, omit this opportunity of returning thanks to a gentleman who published a "Defence" of my "Journal," and has added to the favour by communicating his name to me in a very obliging letter.

It would be an idle waste of time to take any particular notice of the futile remarks, to many of which, a petty national resentment, unworthy of my countrymen, has probably given rise; remarks, which have been industriously circulated in the publick prints by shallow or envious cavillers, who have endeavoured to persuade the world that Dr. Johnson's character has been *lessened* by recording such various instances of his lively wit and acute judgment, on every topick that was presented to his mind. In the opinion of every person of taste and knowledge that I have conversed with, it has been greatly *heightened;* and I will venture to predict, that this specimen of the colloquial talents and extemporaneous effusions of my illustrious fellow-traveller will become still more valuable, when, by the lapse of time, he shall have become an *ancient;* when all those who can now bear testimony to the transcendent powers of his mind shall have passed away, and no other memorial of this great and good man shall remain but the following "Journal," the other anecdotes and letters preserved by his friends, and those incomparable works which have for many years been in the highest estimation, and will be read and admired as long as the English language shall be spoken or understood. J. B.

London, 15th August, 1786.

XII.

A CHRONOLOGICAL CATALOGUE

OF THE

PROSE WORKS [1] OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

N. B.—To those which he himself acknowledged is added *acknowl.* To those which may be fully believed to be his from internal evidence is added *intern. evid.*

1735. Abridgement and translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia, *acknowl.*

1738. Part of a translation of Father Paul Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, *acknowl.*

N. B.—As this work, after some sheets were printed, suddenly stopped, I know not whether any part of it is now to be found.

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Life of Father Paul, *acknowl.*

1739. A complete vindication of the Licenser of

[1] I do not here include his poetical works; for, excepting his Latin translation of Pope's Messiah, his London, and his Vanity of Human Wishes, imitated from Juvenal; his Prologue on the opening of Drury-lane Theatre by Mr. Garrick, and his Irene, a Tragedy, they are very numerous, and in general short; and I have promised a complete edition of them, in which I shall, with the utmost care, ascertain their authenticity, and illustrate them with notes and various readings.—Boswell. [The meaning of this sentence, and particularly of the word *excepting*, is not very clear. Perhaps Mr. Boswell wrote, "they are *not* very numerous," which would be less obscure.—Ed.]

the Stage from the malicious and scandalous aspersions of Mr. Brooke, authour of Gustavus Vasa, *acknowl.*

Marmor Norfolciense: or an Essay on an ancient prophetical inscription in monkish rhyme, lately discovered near Lynne in Norfolk, by PROBUS BRITANNICUS, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Life of Boerhaave, *acknowl.*

Address to the Reader, *intern. evid.*

Appeal to the Publick in behalf of the Editor, *intern. evid.*

Considerations on the case of Dr. Trapp's Sermons; a plausible attempt to prove that an authour's work may be abridged without injuring his property, *acknowl.*

1* Address to the Reader in May.

1740. FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Life of Admiral Drake, *acknowl.*

Life of Admiral Blake, *acknowl.*

Life of Philip Barretier, *acknowl.*

Essay on Epitaphs, *acknowl.*

1741. FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

A free translation of the Jests of Hierocles, with an introduction, *intern. evid.*

Debate on the *Humble Petition and Advice* of the Rump Parliament to Cromwell, in 1657, to assume the title of King; abridged, methodized, and digested, *intern. evid.*

Translation of Abbé Guyon's Dissertation on the Amazons, *intern. evid.*

Translation of Fontenelle's Panegyrick on Dr. Morin, *intern. evid.*

1742. FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Essay on the Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough, *acknowl.*

An Account of the Life of Peter Burman, *acknowl.*

The Life of Sydenham, afterwards prefixed to Dr. Swan's edition of his works, *acknowl.*

Proposals for printing Bibliotheca Harleiana, or a Catalogue of the Library of the Earl of Oxford, afterwards prefixed to the first volume of that catalogue, in which the Latin accounts of the books were written by him, *acknowl.*

Abridgement, entitled Foreign History, *intern. evid.*

Essay on the Description of China from the French of Du Halde, *intern. evid.*

1743. Dedication to Dr. Mead of Dr. James's Medicinal Dictionary, *intern. evid.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Parliamentary Debates under the name of Debates in the Senate of Lilliput from Nov. 19, 1740, to Feb. 23, 1742-3, inclusive, *acknowl.*

Considerations on the Dispute between Crousaz and Warburton on Pope's Essay on Man, *intern. evid.*

A Letter, announcing that the Life of Mr. Savage was speedily to be published by a person who was favoured with his confidence, *intern. evid.*

Advertisement for Osborne concerning the Harleian Catalogue, *intern. evid.*

1744. Life of Richard Savage, *acknowl.*

Preface to the Harleian Miscellany, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

1745. Miscellaneous Observations on the tragedy of Macbeth, with remarks on Sir T. H.'s (Sir Thomas Hanmer's) Edition of Shakspeare, and proposals for a new Edition of that Poet, *acknowl.*

1747. Plan for a Dictionary of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, addressed to Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Lauder's Proposals for printing the *Adamus Exul* of Grotius.

[Abridgement of Foreign History, *Gent. Mag*, 1794, p. 1001.]

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

1748. Life of Roscommon, *acknowl.*

Foreign History, November, *intern. evid.*

FOR MR. DODSLEY'S PRECEPTOR.

Preface, *acknowl.*

Vision of Theodore the Hermit, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

1749. * Letter on Fire Works.

1750. The RAMBLER, the first paper of which was published 20th of March this year, and the last 17th of March, 1752, the day on which Mrs. Johnson died[2], *acknowl.*

Letter in the General Advertiser to excite the attention of the publick to the performance of Comus, which was next day to be acted at Drury-lane playhouse for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter, *acknowl.*

Preface and Postscript to Lauder's Pamphlet, entitled "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns in his Paradise Lost," *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Address to the Publick concerning Miss Williams's Miscellanies.

1751. Life of Cheynel, in the Miscellany called "The Student," *acknowl.*

Letter for Lauder, addressed to the Reverend Dr. John Douglas, acknowledging

1 [These and several other articles, which are marked with an asterisk, were suggested to Mr. Malone by Mr. Chalmers as probably written by Dr. Johnson; they are, therefore, placed in this general list.—ED.]

2 This is a mistake. The last number of the Rambler appeared on the 14th of March, three days before Mrs. Johnson died. See vol. i. p. 89.—MALONE.

his fraud concerning Milton in terms of suitable contrition, *acknowl.*

Dedication to the Earl of Middlesex of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox's "Female Quixote," *intern. evid.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Preface.

* Criticism on Moore's Gil Blas.

1753 Dedication to John, Earl of Orrery, of Shakspeare illustrated, by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, *acknowl.*

During this and the following year he wrote and gave to his much loved friend, Dr. Bathurst, the papers in the Adventurer, signed T., *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Preface.

* Notice of Mr. Edward Cave's death, inserted in the last page of the index.

1754. Life of Edward Cave in the Gentleman's Magazine, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Preface.

1755. A DICTIONARY, with a Grammar and History of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, *acknowl.*

An account of an Attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Theory of the Variations of the Magnetical Needle, with a Table of the Variations at the most remarkable cities in Europe, from the year 1660 to 1780, *acknowl.* This he wrote for Mr. Zachariah Williams, an ingenious ancient Welsh gentleman, father of Mrs. Anna Williams, whom he for many years kindly lodged in his house. It was published with a translation into Italian by Signor Baretti. In a copy of it, which he presented to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, is pasted a character of the late Mr. Zachariah Williams, plainly written by Johnson, *intern. evid.*

1756. An Abridgement of his Dictionary, *ackn.*

Several Essays in the Universal Visitor, which there is some difficulty in ascertaining. All that are marked with two asterisks have been ascribed to him, although I am confident, from internal evidence, that we should except from these "The Life of Chaucer," "Reflections on the State of Portugal," and "An Essay on Architecture." And from the same evidence I am confident that he wrote "Further Thoughts on Agriculture" and "A Dissertation on the State of Literature and Authours." The Dissertation on the Epitaphs, written by Pope, he afterwards acknowledged, and added to his "Idler."

Life of Sir Thomas Browne, prefixed to a new edition of his Christian Morals, *acknowl.*

In the LITERARY MAGAZINE, or UNIVERSAL REVIEW, which began in January, 1756, his ORIGINAL ESSAYS are,

The Preliminary Address, *intern. evid.*

An Introduction to the Political State of Great Britain, *intern. evid.*

Remarks on the Militia Bill, *intern. evid.*

Observations on his Britannick Majesty's Treaties with the Empress of Russia and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, *intern. evid.*

Observations on the Present State of Affairs, *intern. evid.*

Memoirs of Frederick III., King of Prussia, *intern. evid.*

In the same MAGAZINE his REVIEWS are of the following books: "Birch's History of the Royal Society;" "Browne's Christian Morals;" "Warton's Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope," vol. i.; "Hampton's Translation of Polybius;" "Sir Isaac Newton's Arguments in proof of a Deity;" "Borlase's History of the Isles of Scilly;" "Home's Experiments on Bleaching;" "Browne's History of Jamaica;" "Hales on Distilling Sea-Waters, Ventilators in Ships, and curing an ill taste in Milk;" "Lucas's Essay on Waters;" "Keith's Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops;" "Philosophical Transactions," vol. xlix.; "Miscellanies by Elizabeth Harrison;" "Evans's Map and Account of the Middle Colonies in America;" "The Cadet, a Military Treatise;" "The Conduct of the Ministry relating to the present War, impartiality examined," *intern. evid.*

"Mrs. Lennox's Translation of Sully's Memoirs;" "Letter on the Case of Admiral Byng;" "Appeal to the People concerning Admiral Byng;" "Hanway's Eight Days' Journey and Essay on Tea;" "Some further particulars in Relation to the Case of Admiral Byng, by a gentleman of Oxford," *acknowl.*

Mr. Jonas Hanway having written an angry Answer to the Review of his Essay on Tea, Johnson, in the same collection, made a reply to it, *acknowl.* This is the only instance, it is believed, when he condescended to take notice of any thing that had been written against him; and here his chief intention seems to have been to make sport.

Dedication to the Earl of Rochford of, and Preface to, Mr. Payne's Introduction to the Game of Draughts, *acknowl.*

Introduction to the London Chronicle, an Evening Paper, which still subsists with deserved credit, *acknowl.*

* "Observations on the Foregoing Letter," i. e. A Letter on the American Colonies.

1757. Speech on the Subject of an Address to the Throne after the Expedition to Rochefort; delivered by one of his friends in some publick meeting: it is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for October, 1785. *intern. evid.*

The first two paragraphs of the Preface to Sir William Chambers's Designs of Chinese Buildings, &c. *acknowl.*

1758. The Idler, which began April 5, in this year, and was continued till April 5, 1760, *acknowl.*

An Essay on the Bravery of the English Common Soldiers was added to it, when published in volumes, *acknowl.*

1759. Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, a Tale, *acknowl.*

Advertisement for the Proprietors of the idler against certain persons who pirated those papers as they came out singly in a newspaper called the Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette, *intern. evid.*

For Mrs. Charlotte Lennox's English Version of Brumoy, "A Dissertation on the Greek Comedy," and the General Conclusion of the Book, *intern. evid.*

Introduction to the World Displayed, a Collection of Voyages and Travels, *acknowl.*

Three Letters in the Gazetteer, concerning the best plan for Blackfriars-bridge, *acknowl.*

1760. Address of the Painters to George III. on his Accession to the throne, *intern. evid.*

Dedication of Baretti's Italian and English Dictionary to the Marquis of Abreu, then Envoy-Extraordinary from Spain at the Court of Great Britain, *intern. evid.*

Review in the Gentleman's Magazine of Mr. Tytler's acute and able vindication of Mary Queen of Scots, *acknowl.*

Introduction to the proceedings of the Committee for Clothing the French Prisoners, *acknowl.*

1761. Preface to Rolt's Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, *acknowl.*

Corrections and Improvements for Mr. Gwyn the Architect's pamphlet, entitled "Thoughts on the Coronation of George III." *acknowl.*

1762. Dedication to the King of the Reverend Dr. Kennedy's Complete System of Astronomical Chronology unfolding the Scriptures, 4to edition, *acknowl.*

Preface to the Catalogue of the Artist's Exhibition, *intern. evid.*

1763. Character of Collins in the Poetical Calendar, published by Fawkes and Woty, *acknowl.*

Dedication to the Earl of Shaftesbury of the edition of Roger Ascham's English Works, published by the Reverend Mr. Bennett, *acknowl.*

The Life of Ascham, also prefixed to that edition, *acknowl.*

Review of Telemachus, a Masque, by the Reverend George Graham, of Eton College, in the Critical Review, *acknowl.*

Dedication to the Queen of Mr. Hoole's Translation of Tasso, *acknowl.*

Account of the Detection of the Imposture of the Cock-lane Ghost, published in the Newspapers and Gentleman's Magazine, *acknowl.*

1764. Part of a Review of Granger's "Sugar Cane," a Poem, in the London Chronicle, *acknowl.*

Review of Goldsmith's "Traveller," a Poem, in the Critical Review, *acknowl.*

1765. The Plays of William Shakspeare, in eight volumes, 8vo. with Notes, *acknowl.*

1766. The Fountains, a Fairy Tale, in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, *acknowl.*

1767. Dedication to the King of Mr. Adams's Treatise on the Globes, *acknowl.*

1769. Character of the Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, in the London Chronicle, *acknowl.*

1770. The False Alarm, *acknowl.*

1771. Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands, *acknowl.*

1772. Defence of a Schoolmaster; dictated to me for the House of Lords, *acknowl.*

Argument in support of the Law of *Vicious Intromission*; dictated to me for the Court of Session in Scotland, *acknowl.*

1773. Preface to Macbean's "Dictionary of Ancient Geography," *acknowl.*

Arguments in favour of the Rights of Lay Patrons; dictated to me for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, *acknowl.*

1774. The Patriot, *acknowl.*

1775. A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, *acknowl.*

Proposals for publishing the works of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, in 3 volumes, 4to. *acknowl.*

Preface to Baretti's Easy Lessons in Italian and English, *intern. evid.*

Taxation no Tyranny: an Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, *acknowl.*

Argument on the Case of Dr. Memis; dictated to me for the Court of Sessions in Scotland, *acknowl.*

Argument to prove that the Corporation of Stirling was corrupt; dictated to me for the House of Lords, *acknowl.*

1776. Argument in support of the Right of immediate and personal Reprehension from the Pulpit; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

Proposals for publishing an Analysis for the Scotch Celtick Language, by the Reverend William Shaw, *acknowl.*

1777. Dedication to the King of the Posthumous Works of Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, *acknowl.*

Additions to the Life and Character of that Prelate, prefixed to those works, *acknowl.*

Various Papers and Letters in favour of the Reverend Dr. Dodd, *acknowl.*

1780. Advertisement for his Friend, Mr. Thrale, to the Worthy Electors of the Borough of Southwark, *acknowl.*

First Paragraph of Mr. Thomas Davies's Life of Garrick, *acknowl.*

1781 Prefaces, biographical and critical, to the Works of the most eminent English Poets; afterwards published with the Title of the Lives of the English Poets, *acknowl.*

Argument on the importance of the Registration of Deeds; dictated to me for an Election Committee of the House of Commons, *acknowl.*

On the Distinction between TORY and WHIG; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

On Vicarious Punishments, and the great Propitiation for the Sins of the World by JESUS CHRIST; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

Argument in favour of Joseph Knight, an African Negro, who claimed his Liberty in the Court of Session in Scotland, and obtained it; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

Defence of Mr. Robertson, Printer of the Caledonian Mercury, against the Society of Procurators in Edinburgh, for having inserted in his paper a ludicrous paragraph against them; demonstrating that it was not an injurious Libel; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

1782. The greatest [part], if not the whole, of a Reply, by the Reverend Mr. Shaw, to a person at Edinburgh, of the name of Clarke, refuting his arguments for the authenticity of the Poems published by Mr. James Macpherson as Translations from Ossian, *intern. evid.*

1784. List of the Authors of the Universal History, deposited in the British Museum, and printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, this year, *acknowl.*

VARIOUS YEARS.

Letters to Mrs. Thrale, *acknowl.*

Prayers and Meditations, which he delivered to the Rev. Mr. Strahan, enjoining him to publish them, *acknowl.*

Sermons, *left for publication* by John Taylor; LL. D. Prebendary of Westminster, and given to the World by the Reverend Samuel Hayes, A. M. *intern. evid.*

Such was the number and variety of the prose works of this extraordinary man, which I have been able to discover, and *am at liberty to mention*[1]; but we ought to keep in mind, that there must undoubtedly have been many more which are yet concealed; and we may add to the account, the numerous letters which he wrote, of which a considerable part are yet unpublished. It is hoped that those persons, in whose possession they are, will favour the world with them.

JAMES BOSWELL.

1 [This is a strange phrase. What work could it have been that Mr. Boswell was not *at liberty to mention?* That there was some peculiar meaning here can hardly be doubted. It *perhaps* may allude to some publications of a jacobite tendency, written in Johnson's earlier days, and which may have been acknowledged in confidence to Boswell; but this is a mere conjecture. Many of the articles inserted in the foregoing list *on internal evidence* (particularly those from the magazines) are of very little importance and of very doubtful authenticity.—ED.]

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the 'Idler,' i. 141.—being compelled to retrench his expenses, he breaks up housekeeping, and removes to chambers in the Temple, i. 143—[1759] loses his mother, i. 145.—writes his 'Rasselas' to defray the expenses of her funeral and to pay some debts, i. 148.—makes an excursion to Oxford, i. 151.—writes a 'Dissertation on the Greek Comedy,' the Introduction to the 'World Displayed,' and 'Three Letters concerning the best Plan for Blackfriars bridge,' i. 150, 152.—[1760] writes 'Address of the Painters to George III. on his accession,' the Dedication to Baretti's Italian Dictionary, and a review of Tytler's Vindication of Mary, Queen of Scots, i. 153.—forms rules and resolutions for the guidance of his moral conduct and literary studies, i. 154.—[1761] writes Preface to 'Rolt's Dictionary of Trade and commerce,' i. 156.—[1762] writes Dedication to the king of 'Kenedy's Astronomical Chronology,' the Preface to the Catalogue of the Artists' Exhibition, and the Dedication of Mrs. Charlotte Lenox's 'Female Quixote,' i. 159.—obtains a pension of 300*l.* a year, as the reward of his literary merit, i. 161.—Accompanies Sir Joshua Reynolds in a visit to Devonshire, i. 163.—[1763] writes Character of Collins, Life of Ascham, Dedication to Hoole's Tasso, and Detection of the Imposture of the Cock-lane Ghost, i. 166, 183, 206.—Boswell becomes acquainted with him, i. 174.—[1764] the 'Literary Club' founded, i. 212.—afflicted with a severe return of his hypochondriack disorder, i. 214.—writes a review of Granger's 'Sugar Cane,' and of Goldsmith's 'Traveller,' i. 213—visits his friend, Dr. Percy, in Northamptonshire, i. 215.—[1765] visits the University of Cambridge, i. 216.—created Doctor of Laws by Dublin University, i. 217.—is introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, i. 218, 221.—gives to the world his edition of Shakspeare, i. 222.—[1766] writes the noble dedication to the king of Gwyn's 'London and Westminster improved,' and 'The Fountains,' a fairy tale, i. 234.—[1767] his interview with the king, i. 239.—interesting extract from his devotional record, i. 442.—writes dedication to the king of 'Adam's Treatise on the Globe,' i. 243.—[1768] writes prologue to Goldsmith's 'Good-natured Man,' i. 244.—visits Oxford, i. 244.—[1769] appointed professor in ancient literature to the Royal Academy of Arts, i. 252.—passes the summer at Oxford, Lichfield, and Brighton, i. 253.—appears at the Old Bailey as a witness on the trial of Baretti for murder, i. 264.—[1770] publishes 'The False Alarm,' i. 270.—[1771] publishes 'Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Island,' i. 272.—design of bringing him into parliament, i. 274.—engaged in preparing a fourth edition of his folio Dictionary, i. 283.—[1772] writes 'Defence of a Schoolmaster,' and 'Argument in support of Vicious Intromission,' i. 296.—interesting sketches of the state of his mind at this time, i. 298.—[1773] publishes new edition of his folio Dictionary, i. 88.—writes preface to 'Macbean's Dictionary of Ancient Geography,' and argument in Favour of Lay Patrons, i. 301.—at sixty-four, attempts to learn the Low Dutch languages, i. 322.—injures his eyesight by the imprudent use of small print, i. 322.—his journey with Boswell to the Hebrides, i. 323.—presented with the freedom of Aberdeen, i. 351.—[1774] engaged in writing his 'Journey to the Western Islands,' i. 473.—makes a journey into North Wales with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, i. 478.—spends some time with Mr. Burke at Beaconsfield, i. 493.—writes 'The Patriot,' i. 494.—[1775] publishes his 'Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland,' i. 500.—publishes 'Taxation no Tyranny,' i. 505.—receives his diploma as Doctor of Laws from the University of Oxford, i. 512.—makes a tour to France with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, ii. 9.—[1776] writes an Argument in support of the Liberty of the Pulpit, Proposals for an Analysis of the Scotch Celtick Language, and a Defence of the Booksellers from the Charge of making exorbitant Profits, ii. 28.—pays a visit to Oxford and Lichfield, ii. 34.—visits Bath with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, ii. 65.—[1777] engages with the booksellers to write 'The Lives of the English Poets,' ii. 92.—writes dedication to the king of the Posthumous Works of Dr. Pearce, ii. 93.—visits Oxford and Derbyshire, ii. 102.—exerts his humane and zealous interference in behalf of Dr. Dodd, ii. 104.—[1778] his visit to Warley Camp, ii. 197.—his home made uncomfortable by the perpetual jarrings of those whom he sheltered under his roof, ii. 199.—[1779] publishes the first four volumes of his 'Prefaces, biographical and critical, to the most eminent of the English Poets,' ii. 201.—[1780] employed in the completion of the 'Lives of the Poets,' ii. 225.—[1781] completes his 'Lives of the Poets,' ii. 266.—loses his friend Mr. Thrale, ii. 288.—appointed one of his executors ii. 288.—loses his friend Mr. Strahan, ii. 294.—p ans a life of greater diligence, ii. 308.—purposes to devote six weeks to the study of Italian literature, ii. 309.—visits Oxford, Birmingham, and Lichfield, ii. 309.—[1782] loses his old friend Robert Levett, ii. 310.—declining state of his health, ii. 312.—visits Oxford, ii. 319.—takes a parting adieu of Streatham; his prayer on leaving Mr. Thrale's family, ii. 322.—reads a book of the Æneid every night for twelve nights, ii. 346.—[1783] attacked with a stroke of the palsy, ii. 350.—visits Lichfield and Oxford, ii. 353.—institutes the Essex Head Club, ii. 365.—seized with a spasmodic asthma, ii. 365.—[1784] visits Oxford, ii. 381.—his friends project a tour to Italy for the benefit of his health, ii. 400, 405, 411.—visits Lichfield, Birmingham, and Oxford for the last time, ii. 414.—his extraordinary expiatory visit to Uttoxeter, ii. 424, 424 *n.* *His last illness and death.*—rapid increase of his disorders, ii 428.—his preparations for death, ii. 431.—particulars, by Boswell, of his remaining days, ii. 433.—makes a liberal provision for his negro servant, Francis Barber, ii. 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